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THE JEW OF ZEMPLIN.

Calanus

THE JEW OF ZEMPLIN.

A DRAMA,
IN FIVE ACTS.

BY P. H. CALMUS.

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THE JEW OF ZEMPLIN

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CAST OF CHARACTERS.

| | |
|---------------------------------|--------------------|
| JAMES BLUE, a rich landlord. | CURATE. |
| JACOB AARONSON. | 1ST ROBBER. |
| SANDUR BERENY. | 2ND ROBBER. |
| JANUSH DROSHKA, a horse dealer. | 3RD ROBBER. |
| SEGO, leader of robber band. | LULU BERENY. |
| MISKA, servant. | SARAH AARONSON. |
| TRAMP. | SUSAN. |
| PRIEST—FATHER CLARIUS. | FEMALE MISSIONARY. |

PEASANTS, ROBBERS AND VILLAGERS.

THE JEW OF ZEMPLIN

THE JEW OF ZEMPLIN.

ACT I.

SCENE I.—*Drawing room.*

JAMES BLUE. Twelve months to-day since Lulu married that blockhead. My future, which, at one time, was so bright, was then blighted and yet, should I succeed in an undertaking, very peculiar in its nature, I may yet recover what by right belongs to me.

Enter JANUSH DROSHKA.

J. B. Ha! I am delighted to see you. Take a seat.

JANUSH D. I've excellent news. (Take a seat.) What may be the matter, Mr. Blue. You seem to be excited? (In a whisper.) Has anything transpired since I was here last?

JAMES BLUE. Hush! Hush! Nothing! Only a visionary imagination of some future evil. Have you anything of importance to communicate?

JANUSH D. Yes. My mission this morning is of great importance. In short, if we want to accomplish anything we must strike the iron while it's hot.

JAMES BLUE. Proceed.

JANUSH D. A fortnight or so ago a stranger arrived in the village; a rather prepossessing fellow. To be brief, I saw him, spoke to him and he is the very man for our purpose.

JAMES BLUE. But—what—how—I mean can you trust him?

JANUSH D. Yes. He is a stranger. No one in the village knows him, and he will go as he came. Now, Mr. Blue, before making any attempt what shall be my reward?

JAMES BLUE. Ten Thousand Guilders.

JANUSH D. You must make it twenty.

JAMES BLUE. Say fifteen.

JANUSH D. Twenty or no trade.

JAMES BLUE. You shall have the money you demand, providing no trace is left.

JANUSH D. Agreed. And now, Mr. Blue, I demand a written guarantee. Times are very critical, and death, you know, seals a verbal contract.

JAMES BLUE. And what guarantee can you give me?

JANUSH D. My services.

JAMES BLUE. And suppose you fail?

JANUSH D. Impossible. We must succeed, for our plans are well laid. Now, if satisfactory, you can write the agreement as I dictate.

JAMES BLUE. (Prepared to write.) Proceed.

JANUSH D. I, James Blue, of sane mind, promise to pay to Janush Droshka the sum of Twenty Thousand Guilders for following services, to-wit: Said Janush Droshka to kidnap a certain individual by name, Sandur Bereny. And Janush Droshka further agrees to destroy the existence of said Sandur Bereny.

JAMES BLUE. Stop! understand, no murder!

JAMES D. I understand you, and promise. Sandur Bereny's existence will be entirely wiped away; and yet his life shall not be destroyed. Sign first. (James Blue hands pen to Janush.)

JANUSH D. Now, Mr. Blue, have everything ready by to-morrow night. Be sure to keep the back door open and in the mean time take care of yourself. (Exit.)

JAMES BLUE. (Meditating). A pretty piece of business, this indeed. Lulu, your knowledge as to James Blue's power is, I should think, rather limited. Sixteen long years did I watch over that flower, anticipating great results, and to make an independent man of myself; then, after so many years of patience, to see another man possess himself of my flower. That is robbery. While I am only trying to recover my lost treasure, which was stolen from me, am I not justified in doing

what my conscience dictates to me is right? (Terribly frightened.) Who says no? Somehow, I don't feel safe with my own utterances. Am I afraid of myself, of my own shadow? (with increased terror.) There in a dungeon he is chained, terribly lacerated, and his eyes are torn out of their sockets. Yes. There he is, pointing at me with a bloody finger! The chain is falling off—torn asunder! He is advancing! Don't lay hands on me! Keeper, Keeper, be quick! Save me! Murder! Murder! (Drops in chair exhausted.)

Enter LULU.

LULU. Father, what is the matter! Look at me, father! It is your Lulu, pray speak to me.

JAMES BLUE. Lulu, is that you? How long have you been here, and what have you heard me say? (grasps her wrist with violence) Quick, tell me, what I have said!

LULU. You have said nothing. But you are not looking well. You must be feverish.

JAMES BLUE. Excuse me, my dear child, as you say I am not well and will retire. Will you have the kindness to conduct me to my room? (Lulu leads him to door.)

LULU. What can be the matter with father? For the last two weeks there has been something mysterious about him; he has no appetite, and in his sleep he talks of some great reward, and daily locks himself up with strange individuals. What can be the matter? I have some bad presentiments. What can they mean? Can it be possible that my father is plotting against the government? Hardly. But I shall find out. Father has always confided in me and as soon as he recovers I will question him.

Enter SANDUR BERENY, singing in good humor.

SANDUR BERENY. Now, my little duckie, what is the matter? Allow me to read your thoughts! The gulash you made for dinner scorched; Susan broke the pitcher; and instead of your twelve hens laying thirteen eggs, they only deposited eleven. Well, well, Lulu don't mind; I've excellent news for you.

LULU. Sandur, you are invariably in such good humor. And do you know, Sandur, that you could make a splendid physiognomist? Ha! ha! ha! But you failed to guess my thoughts. Do you believe in presentiments?

SANDUR B. Presentiments, what do you mean?

LULU. A warning of some future event, either good or bad.

SANDUR B. My belief, my darling, is only based upon nature taking its daily course as intended, and we must not try to pry into the black future. Ha! ha! ha! Does that satisfy your question?

LULU. Sandur, I am not in a jesting humor. My forebodings may be only a nightmare, but I fear something, something that I can't explain.

SANDUR B. Tush! Tush! (serious) Let your mind turn to something pleasant and your bad presentiments will be knocked into a jiffy. Now sit down, and I will give you a piece of news which will at once banish all your fears. (Sitting side by side, James Blue appears on threshold unobserved and listens.) Six weeks ago our District Judge died, and as that office is awarded by our ministerium at Vienna, many applications were made, and some very prominent men sought for the office. My humble application was amongst them, and imagine my surprise on receiving this, (gives her document) the commission, with full authority as District Judge. Here stands before you Judge Sandur Bereny in his power to punish or pardon as his judgment may dictate. (Sings and embraces her.)

LULU. My hearty congratulations. You fully deserve the commission you received; and may our Lord look down upon us, and save us from all evil.

JAMES BLUE. Lulu! (calls from within.)

LULU. Oh, yes; I forgot to mention that father is not feeling well. (Exit Lulu.)

SANDUR B. Judge Bereny! Quite an appropriate name. Imagine myself in the chair of justice. I must be dignified. So—(changing position in chair) prisoner so and so—charged with stealing a hog. Prisoner, you are charged with the awful crime of of abscondency. A hog in the prime of its life, known as the boar of all neighbors, was snatched from its fold of felicity by you; which fact was proven by reliable witnesses. And, now consider yourself convicted; may the Lord have mercy upon your soul. Ha! ha! ha! Excellent, most excellent! Next prisoner—Jacob Aaronson, the Jew, charged with selling rum on Sunday. Jew, stand up! You are charged before this tribunal with the terrible crime of liquidating, runnimging and gingering on our holy day of Sunday. I hereby order, as

your punishment, that the accuser should scrub, wash and clean up in general your grog shop. I would be more lenient, but our holy day must be rigidly observed. That accounts for my severity. Ha! ha! ha! I shall astonish the natives, by giving all justice, and making every crime punishable as it deserves. (seriously). By the way, my wife is becoming rather despondent. She has a great imaginary power which may be called superstition. She fears some evil. It is true I stole my Lulu. Her father, a gruff old fellow, would not consent to our union; but after we were made one, he became reconciled and blessed us. Now all fear dispensed with on that score, what bad presentiment can she have? By the way, I must be off to the ordinary's office to sign the letter of acceptance. (rings bell.)

Enter MISKA, sleepy.

Open your eyes, you sheep skin son of a Shepherd! (strikes an attitude.) Look at me! Know then, you are face to face with the High Tribunal of this land, Judge Sandur Bereny, of Zemplin district. My coat—my hat! (Miska, slow and clumsy, gives him coat and hat) my cane! I will convict you! (Miska gapes.) Remember you are convicted. (exit S. B.)

MISKA. (Rubbing his eyes and looking around suspiciously.) Rem- (gapes) ember, you are con- (gapes) victed. Calling me a son (gapes) of a sheep (gapes) skin shepherd. Hi! hi! hi! Just as soon as a man forgets himself so far as to sell his soul, person, friends and all for the sake of matrimony, he deserves to be banished to the northpole of Zero. Why, before my master made that terrible step I had some power. He was as meek as a lamb. We ate and smoked together; he attended to his business and I to mine. And now look at him, a wreck, a slave to a woman's heart, unmindful as to his fellow man's feeling, careless in person, extravagant in habits, and all for the sake of a woman! Ever since master married there has been no rest for me. Continually working; it's here, Miska, do this, and Miska do that. Nary a good night's rest have I had in the last twelve months. (gapes.)

(Enter MISSIONARY with Bible and papers. Miska on perceiving her is dumb-founded, and eyes her from head to foot. Missionary stands perfectly straight and motionless, facing audience.)

What in the devil is this? (aside) I wonder whether this thing is of male or female persuasion. (aloud) Mr.—Miss—Mr.—excuse me, what may be your business here? You have made a mistake. This is no hotel, Mr.— I mean Miss, you will please put steam on your locomotive, blow your whistle and get! (aside) He—she—I mean this thing must be deaf and dumb. (aloud) I say, your services are not required here, and if you are hungry, as your appearance indicates, go across the street and you'll see the sign of a tavern. (Missionary sighs, Miska

imitates her sigh and position.)

MISKA. (very loud) Are you an escaped lunatic, a living curiosity, or—what in the devil are you?

(Missionary sighs and drops papers, which Miska attempts to pick up, but on perceiving the missionary with eyes upturned and hands in position of prayer, he drops them and imitates her. Above actions repeated three times.) (aside) I guess it is a ghost, and has come here to bring me news from the world beyond. (advances trembling.) I beg indulgence, your ghostship; do not judge a fellow like me too harshly. I am only a human being, and am not yet quite prepared to enter heaven. Please disappear as you appeared, and give me grace.

MISSIONARY. (Talking very fast.) All over the continent from hill to hill, crossing creeks, rivers and oceans, walking or riding, never weary, I have penetrated every habitable spot on the face of the globe where our gospel may be engraved into the human heart. My life, though endangered, I feel protected by our Lord and Master. I am now on my way to China and our Lord above us has directed me to call on all good Christians to help his apostle and aid her with necessary means to accomplish His will, Our Lord and Master above us.

MISKA. Sir—Madame, I mean your perpetual evaporator may gull your grandfather's uncle's son-in-law. No penetration of inhabitants around me, and as no Chinas or heathens are about these premises, you may politely lift your mudtrotters and get. (Missionary, in the meantime, turns her head rapidly from right to left and then, with a look of horror and disgust, screams and falls fainting into Miska's arms.)

SCENE II—*Street Scene.*

Enter JANUSH DROSHKA and SEGO.

JANUSH D. Have you prepared yourself?

SEGO. Don't fear; I am never without these, (produces sponge and bottle,) and should they fail, I have these, (produces a brace of pistols,) but for a sure cure of obstinacy, this (produces a long bowie knife,) serves any argument.

JANUSH D. None of your persuaders are necessary in this case. You will find it a very easy job.

SEGO. All right, pard; but understand, I never take any risks. The odds must invariably be in my favor. Every man, according to his ability, chooses a profession. (with a meaning look at Janush D.) I have chosen one to do jobs. Now, I understand you are to pay me one thousand guilders yearly for the abduction of a certain individual. I am to keep him in close confinement, and at the expiration of five years, I am to receive additional five thousand guilders, as a premium, for tickling him under the chin. (Imitating the action of cutting the throat.)

JANUSH D. Exactly. But you must take him into some foreign country.

SEGO. Never fear! To-night, accompanied by our guest, I'll be off for Wallachia, where air is food and the sun a rarity. Sh! Some one is coming.

JANUSH D. It is only Jacob Aaronson, the Jew.

SEGO. (Astonished and agitated, turns his back to Janush. Aside.) Is it possible that I should meet him now! No. He must not see me. My reward would be his curse, which would follow me through life, and eventually lead me to the gallows.

Enter JACOB.

JANUSH D. Hallo, Jacob, where to?

JACOB. Good evening, Mr. Droshka. I am now on my way to James Blue, as I owe him for one quarter, and he has sent me a notification to pay; besides he has raised my rents. I am working under hard difficulties, Mr. Droshka. My business is very bad; I can hardly pay my government taxes. Oh, my God! what can a poor man do! (shading his eyes with hand.) Who is that, Mr. Droshka?

JANUSH D. No one that you know, Jacob.

JACOB. Is he a stranger in the village?

JANUSH D. Not exactly, but you have never seen him.

SEGO. (In a husky voice to Janush D.) Let him go.

JACOB. I have heard that voice before. (greatly excited.) Yes, Mr. Droshka, I know him! He is — (Sego jumps at him and chokes him; Jew falls unconscious.)

SEGO. Come! Let's get away from here. (Exit J. D. and Sego.)

JACOB. (After gaining consciousness.) Yes, it was he. Samuel, my son, my only child. Samuel, whom we have mourned as dead for the last twelve years. Was it a dream? My Samuel living? Impossible. Oh, how my head aches! Where am I? My eyes are dim, my mind is wandering. Death, the saviour of all tortures and miseries, come—come, you are welcome! Samuel here and in a robber's garb! Oh, God of Israel, give ear to my utterances! Curse him! May his life be a thousand hells on earth; may the air that he inhales be a boiling liquid of lead; may he live one thousand years with vermin imbedded in his miserable body; may his flesh drop off ounce by ounce and be devoured by the ravens of the desert; may he live to see his bare bones bleached by the sun and crumble before his eyes; and may his black soul, after taking its eternal flight to the bottom of hell, there find relief in fire and brimstone. Oh! God, as thou art merciful and forgiving, I pray to Thee to lighten my heart and have mercy upon me. Let my vengeance be thy compassion, my curse thy blessing. Oh! what would Sarah, my wife, say should she know that Samuel, whom she thinks dead and prays for daily, is alive; a highwayman and robber. No! No! she must never know it! Samuel Aaronson, who deserted the Austrian army twelve years ago, and was reported to have been killed, shall be dead—dead—dead to her forever! (walking feebly.) I was mistaken. I have no child. Only one I had, a son, and he died. Childless, penniless, homeless, spiritless, (with outstretched arms,) I am now ready. Come! come, death! and be my relief. (Exit.)

SCENE III.—*Mountainous Scene—Robbers' Camp—Robbers Singing—Stage Dark.*

FIRST R. To-night we shall journey to Wallachia, a land of gold, where our profession is recognized as a legal avocation of justice,

ALL. Hurrah! Hurrah!

FIRST R. A land, where in broad daylight, as well as in the dead of night, we can, with impunity and without fear, demand the gold.

ALL. Hurrah! Hurrah!

SECOND R. Yes, where we enter in the dead of night, father, husband, wife and children, with smiles upon their countenances, are dreaming of a happy future; the infant lying at its mother's breast taking nourishment from that fountain of life. There, with impunity, we enter. We hear the terrible shriek of robbers! robbers! and then, with trembling limbs and pitiful sighs, they plead to us for pity. "Save our lives!" they cry. "Take all you find, but save our lives!" "Where is the treasure?" we demand. "We have no treasures; all we possess, gold and silver, take; but for God's sake, save our lives!" they entreat. The fatal blade strikes, and the husband lies a bleeding corpse under our feet. The infant is then seized, and holding the poor innocent with its head downward, we demand, "Deliver up the treasures!" The mother, kneeling before us, prays fervently, "Take my life, but save my child!" Two minutes more and all is quiet.

ALL. Ha! ha! ha!

THIRD R. Pard, you are getting sentimental, you'd better don a monk's garb.

SECOND R. At times my spirit fails me, and I am on the verge of repenting. But never mind; I feel my courage returning and I am with you. (A shrill whistle is heard from without.)

ALL. The captain is coming.

Enter SEGO and JANUSH DROSHKA, carrying the unconscious Sandur Bereny.

They lay him on the floor. Sandur Bereny, by degrees, shows life.

SANDUR BERENY. Where am I? What is this? Let me see, or rather let me feel where I am. (Sees Jan. Droshka) Ha! a mask! Oh, my God! some mysterious enemy is upon me. What have I done to deserve this persecution? I am innocent of all offense—all guilt. (Sees Sego.) Ah, I know you now. You are the stranger whom I have seen in the village. Yes, I know you. (Sego forces sponge to his face to chloroform him.) Don't strangle me! Am I to be murdered! Gentlemen, you are mistaken in the man; I am innocent of any offense. (Becoming delirious.) Where is Lulu, where is she? Lulu! Lulu! I care not for myself, murder me, cut me, broil me, but save my dear Lulu. Tell me, is she alive? Oh, my God, what have I done! (Becoming desperate.) Open me up the shrouded graves; open me up, I say, the shrouded graves; set me among the hideous dead in all their ghostly and loathsome putrefaction; give me such a vision; or if there be a pitch of horror still beyond this, then I say, mark me; then I say, open me up all hell at full work hissing, boiling, scalding, roasting, scorching, blazing, but ever-consuming hell, in full operation; the whole dark and penal machinery in full play. There they are! The yell, the scream, the shout, the torture, the laughter of despair! With the pleasing consciousness that all this is to be eternal, fling me, with soul and body, into the uttermost depths of its howling tortures. Do any or all of this, sooner than let any harm come to my Lulu. Oh! A drink! a drink! Water! Water! My throat, my mouth, my tongue are all on fire. (Falls unconscious.)

SEGO. To work, boys, and obey these, my orders. Take this individual and carry him over yonder peak, where our steeds are ready for the journey. And, mind, before the sun dawns, we must be twenty-five miles nearer our destination.

ALL. Long live our captain. (The robbers take up the unconscious Sandur Bereny and are climbing the peak singing all the while. Slow curtain.)

ACT II.

SCENE I.—*Grog shop, poorly furnished; bottles and tumblers on shelves; two small tables and chairs. Sarah discovered knitting. Jacob arranging bottles, and the tramp sitting at table seemingly asleep.*

JACOB. Sarah, my wife, why are you so solemn? It is true, times are hard; but they'll get better, they'll get better.

SARAH. I was thinking of our dear Samuel; night and day he is before me. Last night I had a terrible dream. I dreamt a proclamation was issued that all Jews must at once leave Hungary. There was moaning, wailing and crying

amongst our people. The streets were crowded, and the general cry of the populace was, "Out with the Jews! Kill the Jews!" As the excitement increased, Mr. James Blue caught you by the wrist with his left hand, and in his right he held a dagger. Terrible to behold! "Jacob Aaronson," said he, "Now, you dog of a Jew, if your carcass possesses my secret, your foul breath shall never divulge it." And, as he was about to strike you dead, a tall figure appeared upon the scene, a powerful built man, and grasping the assassin's hand, he cried, "Hold! villain! If you crave for the blood of a Jew, strike here." Baring his breast, "Coward," said he, "you dare not advance on a man of courage." "And who are you?" Demanded Mr. Blue. "Behold in me the lost son of Jacob Aaronson. Samuel Aaronson is my name." At that instant, I awoke, saturated with perspiration.

JACOB. Tush, Tush! Sarah, my wife, lose not your spirit because you had a bad dream. It is only owing to constant thought on a certain subject, with which the mind becomes impregnated; and then, when the body is at rest, the mind is constantly at work.

SARAH. But you see how in reality our people are persecuted; driven out of their house and home, tormented to the last degree of barbarism. Do you know, Jacob, my husband, that at times I regret being born a Jew.

JACOB. You, you, my wife, my constant, indulgent and brave Sarah; you regret being a Jew! And for the sake of earthly freedom! What is this world compared to the above, a world eternal, where justice is meted out as to our deeds here below. Look at me, Sarah! I am a Jew, my father was a Jew, my grand and great grand-fathers were Jews. My religion, which is the true banner of freedom and civilization, should I now denounce? No, no, never!

Enter JANUSH DROSHKA.

JANUSH D. Why, Jacob, you opened your shop rather early this morning.

JACOB. Yes. You see, Mr. Droszka, poor folks have poor ways. We must rise early and retire late. Business is very bad, and we can hardly manage to keep soul and body together. Can I serve you with anything, Mr. Droszka?

JANUSH D. One gill of brandy. (Jacob hands him bottle and glass, Janush drinks.) By the way, Jacob, have you heard the latest sensational news?

JACOB. How am I to hear the news? I seldom go to the village and very few folks come to my shop.

JANUSH D. Something terrible happened in the village last night.

JACOB. What is it? Mr. Droszka.

JANUSH D. Sandur Bereny disappeared, and there is no clue to his whereabouts, but a great many suppositions. Some think he became deranged and left his home while in a delirious state; and others again believe that he was murdered. The whole affair is a mystery, and the village folks are terribly excited over the matter.

JACOB. (Showing signs of uneasiness and agitation.) Disappeared! murdered! Have they any clue, Mr. Droszka?

JANUSH D. I told you, no clue.

JACOB. And how do they know that he was—was murdered?

JANUSH D. I told you once, no one knows.

JACOB. (Taking hold of his wrist.) (In a husky voice,) And what do you think about it, Mr. Droszka?

JANUSH D. (Shaking him off.) Jew, let lose my wrist? (Aside.) I must change that subject, for the piercing eye of that Jew makes me shudder. (Aloud.) By the way, Jacob, you had some fun with that stranger yesterday evening.

JACOB. (Pacing around and murmuring.) I know, I know!

JANUSH D. (with sarcasm.) He made himself known to you in a rather choky way.

JACOB. I know! I know! What did you remark, Mr. Droszka?

JANUSH D. I said, that gentleman yesterday evening made himself known to you in a rather peculiar manner. Ha, ha, ha! Quite a reception indeed! Ha, ha, ha!

JACOB. Do you know the stranger to whom you are alluding?

JANUSH D. Yes.

JACOB. Who is he?

JANUSH D. His name is—well it matters not. By profession, he is a horse dealer.

JACOB. It is a lie! (Janush Droszka draws knife and is about to strike Jacob as Sarah interferes.)

SARAH. Please, sir, do not harm my husband!

JANUSH D. I allow no Jew to give me the lie.

JACOB. (Pacing floor and murmuring.) I know! I know!

JANUSH D. (Takes wallet from pocket and a paper drops from the wallet unobserved.) Here Jacob, is the money I owe you. (Throws money on table.)

JACOB. Thanks, thanks, Mr. Droshka. Call again. (Exit Janush Droshka.)

SARAH. Jacob!

JACOB. (Still pacing and murmuring.) I know! I know!

SARAH. Jacob, what was the matter? I have never before seen you in such fury. These are critical times, and we must be meek. When I saw him draw that murderous weapon, it made my blood curdle within me.

JACOB. (Absent-mindedly.) No difference to me. Let him kill me. A thousand deaths I prefer to such misery. It was he. I know! I know! (Discovers the note that J. D. dropped; reads it to himself, first close to face and then at full arm's length.) Ha, what is this! A conspiracy! Is it possible! I understand it now. Janush Droshka's close conversation with — Sarah, my wife, pray to the Lord to let me live! Sandur Bereny is not murdered!

SARAH. How do you know, Jacob?

JACOB. In this hand I hold proof to convict the conspirators. (Thinking.) But oh, my God, how can I divulge it! Sarah, my wife, retire to your room, I am expecting some one on business.

SARAH. Oh, Jacob, let me remain, if you are alone some one may harm you.

JACOB. Fear not, my wife, I'll take care—I'll take care. (Exit Sarah.)

JACOB. This document I must retain. What excuse can I give, should Janush Droshka return for it. [Thinking.] Let me see—let me see—I have it. [Goes to tramp and shakes him] I say stranger! [tramp wakes] would you object to a drink of good brandy?

TRAMP. [seemingly delighted] I never refuse.

JACOB. [confidentially] I have a small bit of writing to do, but am too nervous to do it myself. Would you do it for me?

TRAMP. Yes.

JACOB. [Gives him paper, pen and ink.] Write as I read to you. [dictates from paper and tramp writes.] I, James Blue, of sane mind, promise to pay to Janush Droshka the sum of twenty thousand guilders for following services, to-wit: Said Janush Droshka to kidnap a certain individual by name Sandur Bereny. Signed James Blue, Janush Droshka.

JACOB. [examining copy.] Very good! very good. [Drops copy on same place where the original was found.]

TRAMP. [Aside.] Thank God for having guided me here to this place. I have the mystery solved.

JACOB. What did you say, stranger?

TRAMP. I said—that I—

JACOB. Yes, you shall have it. [Gives him a drink.]

Enter JANUSH DROSHKA excited. Looks around the room and finds the note.

JANUSH D. Ah, here it is!

JACOB. Have you lost anything, Mr. Droshka?

JANUSH D. Only a trade contract, you know, Jacob, I sell a horse occasionally which nets me a hundred or so.

JACOB. Any developments concerning that dark mystery?

JANUSH D. None whatever.

JACOB. And how is his wife?

JANUSH D. They say she is in a delirious state, and is walking from house to house looking for her husband.

JACOB. Have you seen her, Mr. Droshka?

JANUSH D. No, [aside] confound it! That Jew has some suspicion and the sooner he leaves this locality the better. [aloud] Jacob, I have always been kind to you, patronized you, and in fact I am the best friend you have in the village. Now, Jacob, take my advice and remove to some healthier clime.

JACOB. What are your reasons for advising me to leave?

JANUSH D. Confidentially, I heard threats made against your life.

JACOB. I know! I know! Thank you for your advice. I'll see—I'll see. [Exit Janush Droshka.] [A knock heard at the door.]

JACOB. Come in.

Enter JAMES BLUE.

JACOB. [Very humbly.] I am flattered to receive such a visitor as your honor.

You'll find this a very humble home, very. Take a seat, your honor, take a seat. [James Blue remains standing.] Your visit to my humble home must be of some importance. Command me, and I am ready to obey.

JAMES B. I come to receive from you the quarterly rent, due me.

JACOB. Please, your honor, I haven't the money to-day; but give me a little time, and I'll pay you, I'll pay you.

JAMES BLUE. No. Pay at once or leave my premises.

JACOB. Your honor has always been indulgent with me. I appeal to you not to drive me out of my humble home now. I am a poor man, very poor. Let me remain here and earn my daily bread.

JAMES B. Listen to me: If, within one hour's time, you should fail to pay the two hundred guilders you owe me, then out you go.

TRAMP. Sir, do not be so hard on the poor man. I see he is honest and will pay you.

JAMES B. Who are you, to take up the cause of a miserable Jew?

TRAMP. I am only a poor wandering tramp. Having listened to your conversation and knowing his condition, I plead for justice.

JAMES B. Enough. Pleadings will avail you naught. You've heard my conditions. [turns to leave.]

JACOB. Stop! Don't be too hasty. Consider.

JAMES B. Nothing to consider. You need expect no leniency.

JACOB. [Boldly.] I am obliged to you for giving me at least one hour's time to prepare. The dismissal of Sandur Bereny was on much shorter notice. Ha! You are turning pale; you quiver.

JAMES B. [Aside.] What can he mean? Is it possible that he knows my secret?

JACOB. [With defiance.] Look at me, James Blue, I am anxious to give you a good for a bad turn. Your son-in-law, Sandur Bereny, was last night murdered in your house. With your permission, I can, in one hour's time, yea in half an hour, and should you command me, I could even in less time point out the assassin. Ha, ha, ha! you are silent.

JAMES B. Yes, Jew. [Choking him.] I will silence you forever.

TRAMP. [Pointing pistol at Blue.] Release that man, or by heavens I'll pierce your black heart with a bullet. [Blue releases the Jew.] Your mission is ended, and you go. This man, in one hour's time, will either pay you two hundred guilders, the exorbitant rent you demand for this miserable hovel, or leave your premises.

JAMES B. [Aside.] Why do I fear and quiver at that voice? He wears the garb of a tramp, but his language is commanding like that of a lord. Should I be discovered, I swear by that is holy, the hangman shall never have the pleasure to tie his rope around my neck. [Aloud.] Your trampship will find your interferences in this deal more fatal than you expect. [Exit James Blue.]

JACOB. Sarah! Sarah!

Enter SARAH.

SARAH. Did you call me, Jacob, my husband?

JACOB. Yes, Sarah, my wife. James Blue was here and demanded his rent, we must pay it in one hour's time or leave his premises. And as we are not prepared to meet the demand, we are compelled to vacate. So have everything in readiness before that time expires.

SARAH. Where shall we go? Oh, my God, have mercy on us!

JACOB. Go—anywhere. To the middle of the road; to the forest.

SARAH. Oh, Jacob, go to him and implore his pity and his mercy, pray to him, and his heart will soften.

JACOB. [Shaking his head.] No, Sarah. It will be of no use. He is firm in his resolve, and is bent upon our ruin and total destruction.

SARAH. [crying.] All—all is lost. And after so many years of toil and hardships, we will yet die of starvation.

TRAMP. Jacob, I too am a poor man. My past life has been one of misery and suffering. My experience exceeds your own. This is a treacherous world. I have learned the lesson, "trust no one." Though my appearance does not indicate it, I have nevertheless succeeded in saving a little for emergencies. I could not use it to a better advantage than to help you with it out of your present difficulties. Here, take this! [Gives him a purse.] And pay that villain his money.

JACOB. No—no, my friend, I cannot accept your kind offer. I would rather die on the highway than accept alms; I am no beggar. Keep your money, my

friend, God, in His goodness, sees fit to punish us; therefore, let His will be obeyed.

TRAMP. Don't consider it as an alm. I only offer it to you as a loan. Take it, and pay it back when you can.

SARAH. This good man means well. Accept the loan and save us from misery.

JACOB. Before accepting your kind offer, I must know to whom I am indebted for this noble act. Who are you, and what is your name?

TRAMP. Take my word for it, I am a perfect stranger in this village. I am what I am—a tramp.

SARAH. Jacob, my husband. He is an angel, whom God in His mercy, sent here to deliver us from such a terrible fate.

JACOB. My noble and kind-hearted friend. You must be an angel in disguise, and I will accept your offer. May our God bless you! [Jew silencing blessing tramp who is kneeling before him.]

SCENE II.—*Same as in Act I.—Scene I.*

Enter SUSAN, followed by MISKA.

SUSAN. (crying) Oh, oh, oh! My poor mistress! My poor mistress! Oh, oh, oh! What can I do? What shall I do? Oh, oh, oh!

MISKA. Don't cry, Susan. Your good mistress will recover. Time, you know, will heal the wound.

SUSAN. Oh, oh, oh! My poor mistress! she is crazed with grief. We cannot keep her in the house. Oh, oh, oh! Just think, only married one year and her kind, good husband snatched from her arms in the dead of night and murdered. Oh, oh, oh!

MISKA. (in a comical way) Boo, hoo, boo, hoo, hoo, hoo, my good master murdered! (both cry.)

Enter LULU, delirious.

LULU. (with a blank smile) At last you have returned. Come, let me embrace you. I was so lonely. Don't scold me, Sandur! Advance! Nearer, nearer! Fear me not. Ha! You are leaving me again. No, no, no! You must not go! (makes a dash and in a kneeling position embraces, imaginary.) Ha, ha, ha! I have you now! Oh, Sandur! I have suffered so much, so very much! Father said that you had deserted me. Now that you have returned, we shall part no more. Speak to me, Sandur, I am your wife, your Lulu.

SUSAN. My dear mistress, let me conduct you to your room.

LULU. (rises with animation.) Can't you see him? He is ascending—higher, higher, higher! (with force) A ladder! Give me a ladder! Quick! I say, give me a ladder! Can't you see him floating amongst the clouds? Now he is descending. (Exit with arms extended, watching the clouds. Susan, crying, follows her.)

MISKA. (Imitating Lulu.) Higher, higher! She frightened the life out of me. I wonder, did she really see him going up to the clouds? (Talking to the clouds.) Master Bereny, fly down to your Miska, your companion, and here in my arms you'll be safe. To change the subject, that girl Susan, whenever she cries and carries on so, makes my heart ache. If my mind wasn't made up never to enter the padlock of matrimony, I believe Susan would be the ambition of my heart. One fault she has—too romantic. She don't believe in marrying just so. A fellow will have to make a beautiful speech to win her affections. Let me see, this way it goes: Susan, my bosom flower, (enter Susan, watching him unobserved) my everlasting bliss of harmony and suspense; let me entreat you to grant me at least one look of kindness and gratitude. Oh, Susan, if you only knew how my heart revolutionizes at the sight of you! (kneels) Here, at your feet I kneel to pour out my undying love, a love true, untrampled, uncompromised and reliable. I cannot live without you! Oh, Susan, say the word!

SUSAN. Ha, ha, ha, ha!

MISKA. (confused) I am lost! Lost forever! (Exit both.)

Enter JAMES BLUK.

JAMES B. All seems to work well and in my favor. As I thought Janush Droszka is the right man in the right place. After one year's time the tragedy will be forgotten; Lulu will be herself again; and the battle will be gained. Suppose, though, Lulu proves obstinate, and refuses to marry me? First and most important, she must learn that I am not her father; furthermore she must

learn to obey me. I will picture to her, being an orphan and an outcast, what a life of misery she would lead, should she persist in her obstinacy. I will conquer or die in the attempt! I fear but one individual, that confounded Jew. He must, and shall leave this part of the country or share the fate—

Enter JANUSH DROSHKA.

JANUSH D. I perceive you are alone; were you expecting me?

JAMES B. Not exactly. But now that you are here, we can end our business at the present moment as well as at any other time.

JANUSH D. You have guessed the object of my visit. Your wish has been complied with; Sandur Bereny is there, from where he can never return. Poor fellow! after he regained consciousness, he raved terribly and called his wife. He seems to dread her fate.

JAMES B. So you say; there is no possibility of his ever regaining freedom?

JANUSH D. None. He was taken in charge of by one of the most desperate and dreaded robbers in Hungary; and carried into the interior of Wallachia, there to be kept under the strictest surveillance for a stipulated time.

JAMES B. And after the expiration of that time?

JANUSH D. Ha, ha ha! Do not trouble yourself. He will never return.

JAMES B. Do you think it possible for any one in the village to possess our secret?

JANUSH D. No. Why do you ask?

JAMES B. I have good reasons to believe that Jacob, the Jew, either suspicions or knows the exact circumstances.

JANUSH D. Nonsense! He cannot possibly know; but I believe myself he will try to ferret out our secret; so the sooner he leaves the village the better for us. Suppose we now exchange compliments?

JAMES B. What do you mean?

JANUSH D. A settlement, as per agreement.

JAMES B. Very well. (Takes a purse from a secret drawer.) Have you the contract with you?

JANUSH D. Yes. (Hands him contract, James Blue reads it in silence, he seems to be puzzled and becomes greatly excited.)

JAMES B. Sir, do not trifle with me. I am not in a jesting humor.

JANUSH D. I don't understand you!

JAMES B. (striking the contract.) This is not the contract I gave you.

JANUSH D. It is the same I received from you.

JAMES B. It is a lie! Janush Droshka, I repeat to you that I am not in the humor for a jest. Deliver to me the original, or by Heaven I'll stab you to the heart. (Produces a bowie knife.)

JANUSH D. You need not excite yourself so; the contract has been in my possession since I received it from you. But if your little game is not to pay the money, necessity will compel me to expose the affair, and you can well imagine the consequence.

JAMES B. Ah, ha, villain! I see now you are the one who has betrayed me. You cannot leave this room before you produce the original contract.

JANUSH D. I have no other.

JAMES B. (stabbing him.) Then die like a dog!

JANUSH D. (falls heavily.) Murder! Murder!

JAMES B. Now, Janush Droshka, you are at liberty to expose me! Fate! Oh, terrible fate! Was I destined to be a murderer! (looks at contract.) Can it be possible that this is my own handwriting? I was trying to avoid the murder of one, and now necessity compelled me—Oh, my God! what have I done! Wake Janush Droshka—wake, and receive the twenty thousand guilders! (Reads contract again.) Yes; this is my own writing, my own signature. (Feels hand of J. D.) Dead! Dead! What can I do to hide this miserable work? Ha! Some one is coming! (Exit in haste.)

Enter Jew, first standing at the door looking in.

JACOB. Here I am to the minute. Two hundred guilders in one hour! That stranger came to us from heaven to save us from utter ruin and starvation. Your money is right here, James Blue. (Tapping his pocket.) But where can he be? Proud, avaricious James Blue; little do you know what the future will bring forth. Jacob Aaronson, whom you tried to oppress and drive out of house and home, will yet see you swing on the gallows. (Sees chairs upturned.) He must

- have left the room in haste. (sees body on the floor, shakes him.) I say, my friend, wake up—intoxicated. Why, it is Janush Drosch—blood—a knife! He is dead; some one has murdered him!

Enter LULU, not seeing the Jew.

LULU. I heard voices—voices sounding and resounding like a cyclonic thunder bolt. Oh, my God! how my head aches! My husband—my—love—my future happiness—(crying) all—all taken from me! My good, noble brave Sandur! “Fear nothing” he said, “I have not an enemy in the world.” Oh, my terrible presentiments are at last realized! (crying, then notices the Jew.) Ah, a stranger! Perhaps a messenger! Do you bring me news from my husband? As you believe in a God above, speak—don’t hesitate. I can bear anything; is he dead or alive? (Kneels before Jew who is standing near prostrated body.) Here on my knees. I beg you to have pity on me, and keep me not in such terrible suspense! (sees body near her, becoming delirious.) I perceive you have brought him. Yes, it is he, my Sandur, my husband. Ha, ha, ha! Wake, Sandur; your Lulu is by your side! Your absence has caused me to suffer the terrible agonies of death. Ha! Your hands are cold! What do I see? Blood! He is dead, my Sandur is murdered! (Rises and grasps Jew.) You, sir, murdered him! You shall not escape me! (calling aloud) Father! father! I have the murderer. (Enter Susan, Miska and Tramp.) Here is my husband’s murderer! Oh, take him! He is the mur—der—er— (falls unconscious over the body.)

TRAMP. (to Jew.) Circumstances are strongly against you; therefore leave this country as quickly as possible.

JACOB. I can prove my innocence.

TRAMP. I am aware of that fact, for I know who killed Janush Droszka. Nevertheless you must flee.

JACOB. I must see my wife first.

TRAMP. No; you must leave at once. I will inform her of the circumstances.

JACOB. Take this document, which is in itself a conclusive evidence to convict the assassin. You must be prudent, and above all, protect my wife; go to her at once and console her, and God will award you for your kindness.

Enter JAMES BLUE.

JAMES B. (surprised) What does all this mean?

SUSAN. Please, your honor, a murder has been committed.

JAMES B. What! Some one murdered, and here in my room? Who is it?

SUSAN. We don’t know who the man is that was killed; but as we entered the room, my good mistress held that man (pointing to Jew) and called him the assassin.

JAMES B. Go at once for an officer; he must not escape. (Exit Miska and Susan.) (Jew attempts to leave, James Blue blockades the passage.) Stop! You must await the arrival of the Gendarme.

TRAMP. (Pointing pistol at James Blue) And I say, you villain, he shall pass. (Quick curtain.)

ACT III.

SCENE I.—*After a lapse of one year—Garden scene near mansion—Miska discovered working in the garden.*

MISKA. Ever since the disappearance of Master Bereny, and the murder of Janush Droszka, Master Blue has changed to a tyrant, especially in his actions towards Mrs. Bereny. I heard him ask her what she would do if he should feel disposed to send her adrift. “Father, my dear father,” she exclaimed, “I know you will never drive your daughter and only child from you.” “But,” said he, “suppose I have no child?” Poor, poor Mistress, she is crying continually; life is a mystery to her; and were it not for the hope that her husband may yet return, she would, ere now, have ended her life. Master Blue despises everybody, particularly the Jews. After the assassination of that horse dealer he sent scouts all over the country to apprehend Jacob Aaronson, but the Jew left no trace behind him. “I would willingly give my entire fortune,” said he, “to the man who would bring Jacob Aaronson to me, dead or alive. Would Jacob only show himself to me, I would kill him! Yes, sir, kill him dead! And as repentance, in con-

nection with riches, being an easy task, I would enjoy the possession of a vast estate, buy a title and live like a lord."

Enter Sego.

SEGO. Hallo, contraband!

MISKA. Contraband yourself, sir! Are you aware whom you are addressing?

SEGO. Yes. A being closely connected to a Kangaroo, shaped like an ass, and with the addition of two horns, could pass for a devil. Ha, ha, ha!

MISKA. Sir, I say, sir, you are treading on dangerous grounds; take care!

SEGO. You are right, my good fellow. And very politely I beg your pardon. What may be your name?

MISKA. Mister Miska.

SEGO. Miska who?

MISKA. As I am not interested in your name, you need not be in mine. But as Miska, with the annexation of a title; say for instance, Lord Miska, Baron Miska and so forth, sounds well; you need not make any further investigation.

SEGO. My good fellow, you don't understand me; what was your father's name?

MISKA. I want you to understand, sir, that my father was no vagabond like yourself.

SEGO. I see you are a true and heroic fellow, let us make friends.

MISKA. I don't in particular seek friendship with such a man as you.

SEGO. Come, I have a bit of information to ask of you. (Gives him some coins, which Miska with reluctance accepts.) Mr. Miska, do you know the whereabouts of a man, by name of Janush Droshka?

MISKA. Ha, ha, ha! Where do you hail from. Ha, ha, ha!

SEGO. Was my question so ridiculous as to create such merriment?

MISKA. Why, sir, Janush Droshka has been dead the last twelve months past.

SEGO. Ahem! You certainly do not mean the same individual that I am alluding to! What was that man's profession?

MISKA. A horse dealer.

SEGO. Then it surely must be the same. What was the cause of his death?

MISKA. He was killed.

SEGO. Killed! And pray tell me, who killed him?

MISKA. A Jew by the name of Jacob Aaronson.

SEGO. (shaking him) You are a lying scoundrel; tell me the truth!

MISKA. Please, sir, do not shake me so! I was telling you the truth.

SEGO. Where and how did Jacob kill him?

MISKA. About a year ago, soon after the disappearance of Mr. Bereny, Janush Droshka was found a bleeding corpse in Mr. Blue's room. He was stabbed by Jacob Aaronson.

SEGO. Who is Mr. Blue?

MISKA. Mr. Bereny's father-in-law.

SEGO. What reasons have they for suspecting Jacob Aaronson of the crime?

MISKA. At that time Mrs. Bereny was delirious on account of the loss of her husband. She happened to enter the room just as Jacob stabbed him. At such a terrible sight she regained consciousness and her cries brought us all to the scene.

SEGO. (meditating) Have they arrested him?

MISKA. No, sir. He skipped clear out of sight, and left not one single trace behind him.

SEGO. And where is his wife?

MISKA. Mrs. Bereny?

SEGO. No. The wife of Jacob?

MISKA. She has no particular home; an infuriated mob has chased her through the village time and again, and would have killed her, had it not been for the protection of a strange individual.

SEGO. Any one know that strange individual to whom you allude?

MISKA. No, sir. He dresses like a tramp, but all the village folks say he is a prince in disguise.

SEGO. Where could I find that trampish looking fellow?

MISKA. He frequently loiters about these premises, and if you remain here an hour or so, you'll be apt to see him.

Enter SARAH.

SARAH. (excited) Oh, Mr. Miska, please go to the village and seek that good stranger for me! Tell him my house was entered by a crowd of roughs, who droye

me out, and then burned my house to the ground. (Miska hesitates.) Oh, Mr. Miska, I beseech you, go—do not hesitate!

SEGO. (aside) My poor mother! She is persecuted, chased from place to place like a wild animal; while I, her son, whom she taught to be good and honest, stands before her unknown, an outlaw and a robber. Could I but cast away, forget my past life, and make myself known to her, I would protect her from such terrible outrages. No, I cannot; she must never know that her son is a robber.

MISKA. It is utterly impossible for me to comply with your wish; for should Mr. Blue discover that I carried a message for a Jew, he would at once discharge me.

SARAH. I pray to you, do not make any distinctions, for we are all mortals, be it Jew or Gentile. We all have to give account to Him, who is the ruler of the whole universe.

SEGO. (giving him some coins) Accept this for your trouble, and go seek the man, as that good woman bids you.

MISKA. Very well, sir. I shall endeavor to find the disguised prince; but remember I am serving you. (Exit Miska.)

SARAH. Thanks for your kindness, stranger? God in his goodness will reward you.

SEGO. (as Sarah turns to leave) Do not go yet, Madame. (Sarah becomes alarmed) Fear me not; I have only a few questions to ask you. Are you aware of the whereabouts of your husband?

SARAH. No, sir. He left about a year ago, and I have not heard from him since.

SEGO. What were his reasons for leaving?

SARAH. (sobbing) Oh, sir, do not ask me! My heart breaks to recall the occurrence. (Cries bitterly.) But, sir, being you are so kind, I will relate to you my history: Previous to our removal here, we lived in the town of Ujhely. A happier family could not be found in the district of Zemplin. Our union was blessed with two children, a girl and a boy. Emma, our daughter, renowned in the Kingdom of Hungary for her beauty, was indeed a dutiful child. Proud were we, Jacob and I, to possess such a beautiful flower. But, sir, her beauty was our ruin and degradation. She denied honor, parents, religion and all for the sake of a man—a Gentile. At one time, a regiment of Austrian soldiers were stationed in our town. Amongst many of them who visited our shop, was a Colonel. One fine morning Emma and the Colonel were gone; they had eloped. Oh, sir, (crying) that was a terrible shock! Jacob, my husband, who is a strong orthodox, could not be reconciled; for months he took no food and from over exertion he was prostrated with brain fever. He lingered for a long time between life and death, but thank God, he recovered. After regaining consciousness, he called me to his bedside and said: "Sarah, my wife, I have tried my utmost to end my terrible sufferings, but God, in His wisdom, intends for me to live and expiate my sins." "Now, Sarah, my wife," said he, "you must never, never mention her to me. We have one child, a son, a true specimen of humanity; he will, like his forefathers, remain steadfast to his Jewish belief. Let our memories and the past vanish like shadows of the glittering moon." Sir, imagine the feelings of a wife and mother battling between her esteem and obedience to a husband, and her love for an only daughter! Dear as was my child to me, I had to succumb to the wish of my husband.

SEGO. Have you received any intelligence from your daughter since her elopement.

SARAH. Yes. Two years later, the Colonel was promoted to Brigadier General. He afterwards took part in the bloody war between Maximilian and the Mexicans; my poor child accompanied him there. He was captured, and during his imprisonment, she died of a broken heart.

SEGO. (agitated) And your son?

SARAH. (crying) He is dead.

SEGO. Dead!

SARAH. Yes, kind sir, our miseries did not end there, for soon after that, we were deprived of our son, the essence of our lives. And now, we are amongst strangers, childless, penniless and persecuted.

SEGO. (sobbing) Your son dead—dead? (aside) It is much better, he should be dead!

SARAH. I perceive, sir, you are shedding tears, are you in sympathy with a poor Jewess?

SEGO. My dear woman, I do sympathize with you; your history reminds me of

my own. I have a mother, like you, who taught me to walk the road of righteousness; but (sobbing aloud) instead, I have chosen depravity: she, too, thinks that I am dead—but—but I am living, a rogue and a highwayman.

SARAH. What, a highwayman!

SEGO. (aside) The strife—the terrible strife, mingled betwixt duty, conscience and deeds, must now or never come to an end. Could I but tear my heart from my body, cleanse and replace it!—oh, heart, guide of the human flesh, to you I plead; you are the blame of my degradation and misery; you, who is the guide of good and bad, have forced me to a life of corruption; and now you are coming in conflict with my conscience, which listened to you, and acted according to your dictates. Too late to beat,—too late to plead for reform! Your inky blood must continue to flow through your black vessels! Conscience, my dear and only companion, do not forsake me in this critical moment; give me courage now, and I will abide by all your future dictations. Horrible! oh, horrible; am I to eave to a momentary feeling!—Oh, never! I shall remain what I am.

SARAH. Your actions, kind sir, conflict with your statement. You may have committed deeds revolting to a good and noble conscience as your own; but then, realizing the gross injustice of having done wrong in the past, may lead you to a path of righteousness in the future. Cast off those gloomy meditations! And at any time call on poor old Sarah, who feels towards you as a mother.

SEGO. My dear woman, do not ignite in my heart a single spark that may, perchance, increase to a glaring flame. I am not deserving of a mother. Your kindness, though, I highly value. Should you ever think of your dead boy, think of me, the undeserving man, who is not fit to be acknowledged a son by any mother on earth. Let's change the subject. Will you please relate to me the circumstances of that murder committed here about a year ago?

JAMES BLUE enters unobserved.

SARAH. (pointing to mansion) Do you see yonder house? There originated a double murder; there, sir, was good Sandur Bereny murdered; there, was the murder of Janush Droshka committed, the same hand that slew Sandur Bereny, slew Janush Droshka also. Now, sir, do you think it possible that my husband, an old and decrepid man, could commit such deeds? (holding up hand) As true as there is a God above us, I swear that my husband is innocent. James Blue, who is vicious in his terrible prejudice against our people, ordered us at once to leave his house, where we earned our bread and meat, unless we pay to him in one hour's time two hundred guilders. And had it not been for the stranger, who loaned us the money to satisfy the claim, our only resort would have been the highway and starvation. My husband reluctantly accepted the loan, and started at once to this house to redeem with it our livelihood. On entering the library, expecting to find Mr. Blue, he, to his great dismay, discovered the corpse of Janush Droshka. Between fear and horror, he lingered in the room. Mrs. Bereny, in a delirious state, entered; she caught fast hold of Jacob, and denounced him as the murderer. Luckily, that good stranger again happened to be on hand, and with his assistance, and good advice, my husband escaped.

SEGO. (aside, Sarah in the meantime on the lookout for "the stranger") True enough; the man who killed Sandur Bereny murdered Janush Droshka; and now, possessing the secret and knowing my man, I shall make a demand. The instigator of those crimes shall pay double the sum. Aha! Pard Blue! You have killed your man, to bury your guilt, and save your wealth; but rest assured, your liberties are not settled. I shall demand an accurate account, and compromise at my pleasure.

JAMES B. (aside) Yes, I shall render an accurate account and compromise much sooner than you anticipate. (Exit in haste.)

SARAH. Here they come!

Enter TRAMP and MISKA.

TRAMP. What is the trouble?

SEGO. I have just met this good woman by chance, and she has related to me how she is persecuted by the people. Her condition and pleading touched my heart with pity; though I am not a man of wealth, I would contribute a sum of money to make her more comfortable.

TRAMP. Thanks, my friend. We are not in need of pecuniary assistance, this woman needs peace—peace. You understand?

SEGO. Perfectly. Well, then, suppose we provide for her subsistence in the town of Ujhely?

TRAMP. (Who has been closely watching Sego since entering, and now begins to recognize him.) My good fellow, you seem to be particularly interested in this woman's welfare—and it may be your duty. My boy, I think I know you, (Sego confused) ha, you are confused! By jingo, I shall risk my judgment! (extending his hand) Shake!

SEGO. (unconcerned) I have no objections to shaking hands with you—but—you are, ahem, decidedly mistaken in the man.

TRAMP. General Schutz is never mistaken.

SEGO. What!

TRAMP. I mean, were you not under the command of General Schutz?

SEGO. That is an idle question. There were thousands under his command.

TRAMP. One more question, are you not a brother-in-law to General Schutz?

SEGO. (with sarcasm) Ha, ha, ha! Well, said my friend—I, a brother-in-law to General Schutz! (aside) I am identified as sure as the sun shines, and must make a break for liberty. (aloud) You are certainly jesting, or a false idea has taken possession of you. In either case, to set you right, I introduce myself to you as Sego, a land agent.

TRAMP. Sego, the land agent, be hanged! I am talking to Samuel Aaronson!

SARAH. Merciful God!

TRAMP. My dear woman, this is your son. What object he may have had in disguising his identity, I cannot tell, nor do I care to know.

SARAH. My child living, and here before me! (weeps) Too much joy, too much happiness to be real! Oh, speak to me! Let me look into your eye, there I may discern the link of an Aaronson. (Sego faces her) It is he—my son, my long lost child! (both weep and embrace.)

Enter SOLDIERS.

CAPTAIN. In the name of his Majesty, Francis Joseph, Emperor of Austria, and King of Hungary and Bohemia, I hereby demand an unconditional surrender of a certain individual; description, (reads) Six feet two, dark complexion, black moustache, small black eyes. Said individual, who is charged with murder and robbery, is now on these premises.

SEGO. I am the man you are looking for. Don't weep, mother; it is as I expected. It had to come sooner or later. Remember your son, as he was once upon a time, true and affectionate. Let the present be a fiction to your memory. To you, the friend of my poor mother, I appeal; protect her from all future evil! The charges brought against me are true, and my doom is sealed. Now, one more duty you must perform. Sandur Bereny, who is supposed to be dead, is living, but is kept for a ransom by a band of fierce men, my followers. Go, as soon as possible to the town of Batchatka in Wallachia; from there take the mainland highway, and you'll reach a valley, a church you'll notice to the right, there commences a chain of mountains which you must climb. Take this whistle, blow three times at intervals, and you'll hear an answer. Guard yourself well, as they are fierce and desperate hounds, and will fight to the last drop of blood. Mother, let me embrace you once more, and give you my farewell kiss. (Soldiers marching out with Sego as the curtain descends. Tramp supporting Sarah who is crying. Miska bewildered. Slow curtain.)

ACT IV.

SCENE—Parlor. Susan singing and dusting furniture. Miska asleep in a chair. Susan tickles him with a straw; Miska tries to catch imaginary fly; Susan continues singing.

MISKA. (in his sleep) Twenty-six feet, six inches, black sourtach. I am—(Susan tickles him) fiercely inhabited—(a tickle)—corruption the true nature of manhood—(a tickle) caught on the fly—(a tickle) flee, they are on your trail (a tickle and Miska catches the straw.) I have you now, you son of the desert! (wakes.)

SUSAN. Ha, ha, ha! Did you catch him, hold on to him, squeeze him tight. Ha, ha, ha!

MISKA. (rising) Are they coming?

SUSAN. Who?

MISKA. Robbers and soldiers.

SUSAN. Ha, ha, ha! You are dreaming with your eyes wide open.

MISKA. I am not dreaming. It is true, true, as sure as you are born. Are we alone?

SUSAN. Yes.

MISKA. (Miska going from door to door on tip toe, then in a whisper) They got him.

SUSAN. Got who?

MISKA. A son of the Jewess, a robber, a murderer, six feet two, dark complexion, black moustache and so forth.

SUSAN. Ha, ha, ha! You have lost your senses! what are you taking about?

MISKA. (coming close to Susan) Listen. Yesterday, whilst I was in the garden working, a large, suspicious looking fellow walked up and questioned me in an insulting manner concerning the whereabouts of Janush Droszka. I, of course, resented the insult in a becoming manner; in the meantime, Sarah, the Jewish woman, ran up to me, and begged me to go after that tramp for her, the same who has been loitering about here for twelve months or so. I refused to go; but the big, dark looking fellow put a lot of jingling coins into my hand, and you know, under those circumstances, I took pity on the Jewess. And as luck would have it, I found the tramp in the tavern. On coming back, we found Sarah in close conversation with that dark man. The tramp recognized him, and told the Jewess in plain words that the big fellow with black moustache was her son. The joy between mother and son was of short duration, for just then a brigade of soldiers came upon us, and arrested the big man, accusing him of being a murderer and robber. (Susan becomes interested; Miska lowering his voice.) Susan, can you keep a secret?

SUSAN. I can.

MISKA. Let me see your tongue! (Susan shows her tongue) Oh, no, I must not tell you!

SUSAN. Why not, Miska?

MISKA. Because. I am a good judge of human nature, on that tongue of yours I can see plainly engraved the word "woman." And a woman, you know—can't keep a secret.

SUSAN. I shall prove myself exceptional.

MISKA. Swear to me, that what I am about to relate to you will remain a sacred secret.

SUSAN. I swear.

MISKA. Master Bereny is living.

SUSAN. How do you know?

MISKA. The big man with black moustache said so. He gave the tramp a whistle, told him to go to Batchuka—Batchaka—or somewhere—in Wallachia, and blow up the robbers three times; then rescue our master, Sandur Bereny.

SUSAN. I must go at once and tell Mistress Bereny the good news.

MISKA. Stop! How about your tongue?

SUSAN. But I must go.

MISKA. Beware, girl! It may be the cause of her death. Suppose he has deceived us, then the disappointment would be fatal to her. You see, (Susan watching his arms encircling her waist) I and the tramp will go to Wallachia, follow the trail of the robber band, kill all those desperadoes and rescue Master Bereny. Then, by degrees—you know, by degrees—we will slowly—and with the greatest precaution—

SUSAN. (slaps him) You are impertinent, sir! (Exit in opposite directions.)

Enter JAMES BLUE.

JAMES B. Now all difficult tasks are over. The fierce battle, which has been raging, is now at an end. My last enemy, whom chance has thrown in my path, is now well out of reach. I can at last breathe freely. Twenty years have passed, and yet it seems to me like yesterday when General Schutz placed his child, then only two years old, in my arms. With tears in his eyes, he said: "Friend James, take this treasure of mine and raise it, watch over it as if it were your own, and should I fail to return within a reasonable time, know that I am dead. My estates in Vienna and Pest I have willed to my child. Take this letter of introduction," said he, "to Herr Von Kramer, my banker, and he will show you all courtesies." I at once crossed the line of Mexico, and reached Vienna in due time. Herr Von Kramer informed me, that in the letter of introduction, he was ordered to pay me

thirty thousand guilders; also, that the entire fortune of the General, valued at over one million florins, was to be given to Lulu, his child, after her marriage; but should father and daughter both be dead, before the time specified in the will, then said properties shall be disposed of for charitable purposes, naming various institutions. Instantly the idea took possession of me to raise that great fortune for myself, said idea, I have continued to cultivate. I have been watching Lulu since her infancy, and for reasons beneficial to myself, did not divulge to her the secret concerning her parentage and fortune. But my plans were upset by Sandur Bereny, who married her without my knowledge. My feelings were mingled with disappointment and revenge. I formed a plot by which to rid myself of the thief, who had stolen from me a clear million. My success in that dangerous undertaking is unprecedented. The path is now clear with but one exception; to-day—yes, to-day, Lulu must promise to become my wife. (rings bell.) (Enter Susan.) Tell Mrs. Bereny that I request her presence immediately. (Exit Susan.) Glorious! I feel as happy as a young successful lover! I have no doubt but Lulu will acquiesce to become my wife. Since I have informed her of her relationship to me, she has changed in temperament. No doubt she will regard her future happiness!

Enter LULU.

LULU. Has anything discomposed you, father?

JAMES B. I have requested you, Lulu, once, twice, thrice, not to call me father!

LULU. Why, sir, should you object to me calling you father? If you are not my father legitimately before God, you are, sir, a father to me before men. You have raised me from my infancy, taught me to respect you as a daughter should respect a father, and now you forbid me to call you by that name!

JAMES B. I wish to have a serious conversation with you, pray to be seated. I trust you are perfectly sensible of the fact that you stand alone in this world, that your past life is shrouded in mystery; which, combined with your present situation, places you in need of protection. I have, as you said, raised you, cared for you, supplied all your wants, then saw you happily married, and comfortably situated; but fortune has played bad with you. I have forbidden you to call me father, so you must regard me with a different feeling to those of a daughter.

LULU. I don't understand you.

JAMES B. Your happiness will be complete by making me one promise.

LULU. I am not aware what promise you may exact of me. If just and reasonable, and not calculated to destroy all my future prospects and happiness, I reply in the affirmative.

JAMES B. A woman like you, Madame Bereny, has no right to make exceptions. Your want of experience, which is only a name for your ignorance of life, renders you incompetent to form any estimate of what constitutes, or may constitute, your happiness.

LULU. Happiness, in what sense, sir?

JAMES B. In any sense, Madame.

LULU. Why address me in a tone of such coldness, if not of severity? All I ask of you is, that when you do honor me with an interview, you will remember that I am something more to you than an utter stranger.

JAMES B. The tone, which I may assume towards you must be regulated by your obedience.

LULU. But in what have I ever failed in obedience to you?

JAMES B. Perhaps you compliment your obedience prematurely. It has never yet been seriously tested.

LULU. I do not wish, sir, to make allusions to the past, unless simply to say, that when severe and trying instances of obedience have ever been exacted of me, I trust I have not been found wanting in duty towards you.

JAMES B. That obedience, Mrs. Bereny, which is reluctantly given, had better have been forgotten.

LULU. You have forced me to remember it in my own defence, but I am not conscious that it was reluctant.

JAMES B. You contradict me.

LULU. No, sir, I only take the liberty of setting you right. My obedience, if you recollect, was ever cheerful; for I did not wish to occasion ill between you and my husband, my dear Sandur! Why should there be such a dialogue as this between us. It is not natural, something I see has discomposed your temper, I am ignorant of it.

JAMES B. You are right; but let us not ponder over past errors. We have a great future before us; therefore let us cultivate good will, learn to love one another; in other words, Lulu, my intentions are firmly set upon to make you my wife. You grow pale!

LULU. I am indeed pale, and I feel that I am, for what is there that could drive the hue of modesty from the cheek of a woman sooner than the fact of such proposition! But I trust you jest, sir. As a man and a gentleman, you would not think seriously of making such a proposal to me.

JAMES B. All very fine sentiment; very fine stuff and nonsense! There is one thing, Mrs. Bereny, you are certain to become, and that is Mrs. James Blue. Remember, also, that I am determined you shall marry me, yes, you shall marry me, or be turned a beggar out into the world.

LULU. I appeal directly to your honor! Such experience will prove very unfortunate to yourself as well as to me. I go upon my knees to you, and entreat you, as you regard my honor and my future peace of mind, to erase the idea you entertain.

JAMES B. Come, Lulu, be good to me, you are all I have in the world, and if I appear harsh to you, it is only because I love and am anxious to make you happy. Come, put confidence in me, and rely upon my affection and generosity.

LULU. I know not how to reply to you, sir. You have placed me in a position of almost unexampled distress and pain. (sobbing.)

JAMES B. Don't weep, Lulu! I am not harsh to you now.

LULU. Alas, I am not ignorant of your stern and indomitable character! But I must confess to you that my affections are for him, Sandur Bereny, my husband.

JAMES B. He is dead, and besides, he was a weak-minded and indiscrete man; he taught you hypocrisy, and in every instance where you go contrary to my will, you act upon his principle.

LULU. My husband, sir, was all truth, all goodness and affection! I will not bear his blessed memory insulted by the very man, who above all others, ought to protect and revere it. If it be our duty to defend the absent, is it not ten thousand times more so our duty to defend the dead? Shall a wife hear, with acquiescence, the memory of her husband loaded with obloquy and falsehoods? No, sir, menace and abuse me as much as you wish, but I tell you while I have life, and the power of speech, I will fling back, even into your face, sir, the falsehoods, the gross and unmanly falsehoods with which you insult his tomb and calumniate his memory and his virtues. Do not blame me, sir, for this language. I would be glad to honor you if I could.

JAMES B. Now mark me—mark me, Madame, you shall sleep under lock and key. I tell you, I shall use the most vigorous measures with you, the severest, the harshest, that I can devise. I shall break that stubborn will of yours. Do not imagine for one moment that you will overcome me! No, sooner than you should, I would break your spirit—I would break your heart.

LULU. What right have you to threaten me? Who are you, sir, to address me so? You say that my existence is a mystery,—I deny your treacherous charge! You, sir, you have tried to blind me as to my name, claiming for me no home, no kin, but that I am an outcast. I may be what you claim, but having the satisfaction that a coward, a scoundrel, and a miserable wretch like yourself, thank God, is not what I thought him to be. I am proud of my ancestry.

JAMES B. Woman, how dare you speak to me in such insulting language!

LULU. My language, sir, is but mild compared to my feelings. The last few minutes has wrought a wonderful change in me, I am no more the Lulu you have raised me to be. I wish to impress it on your mind, that I am Mrs. Bereny and as such must be respected.

JAMES B. Woman, you are toying, unawares, with a lion's paw! You have blighted my future prospects, I shall blight yours. (noise without) Henceforth your smooth road of virtue shall be rugged with thistles and thorns. No—no, Madame, you will not be, as you claim, the wife of Sandur Bereny! (takes hold of her, noise without increasing) I will complete my purpose.

LULU. Help! Help!

JAMES B. By making of you a type of physical wretchedness—

LULU. Help! Help!

JAMES B. Cripple your honor, lower your high-mindedness and break your heart and spirit!

LULU. Help! Help! (noise increasing without.)

JAMES B. Your existence is in my power—

Enter SARAH. (James Blue releases Lulu.)

SARAH. Save me, oh, save me! (without, kill the Jews! Down with the Jews.)

JAMES B. What right have you to enter my house? This is no asylum for the like of you!

SARAH. Sir, I pray to you, save me! My life is in your hands, should you drive me from here, they would kill me.

Enter village folks armed with sticks, pitchforks, etc.

VILLAGERS. There she is! Let's have her, down with her!

Enter tramp, forcing his way through the crowd and facing them.

TRAMP. Stand back! Are you not ashamed to chase a poor and innocent woman? What has she done to deserve such treatment?

A PEASANT. She has done enough—

ALL. Yes, she has done enough! Down with her! Down with her!

TRAMP. Stand back, I say, the first man who dares to lay hands on this woman will die in the attempt.

JAMES B. Fear no one, friends, you are welcome in my house. The person, you seek has no protection under my roof. She is the wife of the Jew, Jacob, who murdered Janush Droshka. (Great excitement amongst villagers.)

TRAMP. Listen to me!

A PEASANT. Let's hear what he has to say!

TRAMP. If you seek the murderer of Janush Droshka, my friends and fellow countrymen, I will join you hand in hand to capture the assassin. The felonious charge of that man yonder, (points to J. B.) that this woman's husband killed a man, is false. My fellow countrymen, the man who killed Sandur Bereny is here; and the cold blooded murder of Janush Droshka was committed by the same cowardly assassin. I accuse, and firmly assert, with sufficient proof and evidence to substantiate; there, (pointing to J. B.) there, stands the murderer.

JAMES B. How dare you, sir, make such false accusations?

TRAMP. False, did you say? (shows him a document) Look at this! This, sir, is the original for which you killed Janush Droshka. Now, can you deny your guilt?

JAMES B. (looking at document) How—how, came you in possession of this? And who are you?

TRAMP. Over fifteen years, traveling all over the continent, have I sought for your abode, and discovered, only by chance, your present locality. You have asked me on various occasions who I am. (removes disguise) Now, James Blue, do you know me! You traitor and perjurer! Your compensation for raising my child would have exceeded any and all reasonable expectations had not your treachery led you to the most terrible deeds. You had, as you thought, disposed of all enemies, but, sir, the true nemesis has for the last twelve months followed your footprints.

JAMES B. Impossible! You are an imposter! Away—away—General Schutz is not living, sir—(General looks him steadily in the face) Oh, turn that face from me, those features are a terrible vision. (aside) I have recorded an oath, that the hangman shall never have the pleasure to tie his rope around my neck. General, you shall see me pay a penalty for my own crimes; but never, at the foot of the gallows. (draws pistol and fires at himself, staggers and holds to chair for support) Lulu—Lulu—fear me not now! Before my soul takes its eternal flight, promise me—Oh, I am dying!—Come nearer, Lulu, and let me call you once more, my child. Lulu, forgive me, I have wronged you. The word father, from your sweet lips, would be an everlasting bliss. But, oh, there—there Lulu, stands your—I am dying (staggers)—oh—(falls to floor) oh, say you forgive me! Forget the terrible past! (faintly) oh, Lulu, my child—once more—forgive me! (curtain.)

ACT V.

SCENE I.—Wallachia. A valley, a small church and mountain scene near by. Priest discovered pacing the ground meditating. Curate watching Priest.

PRIEST. Thine eyes must have no doubt deceived thee or likely a dream appeared to thee so natural, that the impression remained like a reality.

CURATE. No, holy father, it was no illusion. I saw the old regiment pass our holy church and with steady steps march up the mountain.

PRIEST. Art thou sure, that they were Austrians?

CURATE. Not only did I recognize them by their uniform, but was aghast with wonderment, to see them led by General Schutz, whom I have met at various times in Vienna.

PRIEST. Therefore, my dear Curate, it is a foregone conclusion, for such a great personage would surely not trail a robber band.

CURATE. I heard them talk, holy father, and the last remark of the General was, "we must capture those infernal scoundrels, if strategy fails, violence must be used, in brief—they must be taken, dead or alive." Those, my holy father, were his last utterances. And—

PRIEST. ~~Curate~~—eruption on thy tongue, be thy reward for thine contemptible silence! Miserable man, art thou ignorant, that a prevailing evil is a blessing? The fear of harm, by a prevailing evil, is the cause of a future redemption, and sure salvation. How could our church exist, were it not for that powerful redeemer, "Fear." The dread of an earthly punishment exceeds a thousand times the possibility of an everlasting hell and damnation.

CURATE. Holy father, where am I in error?

PRIEST. I have repeatedly expressed to thee the necessity of retaining the robber band, as they are ordained by God to perform a very difficult task,—to punish all evil doers; and thou being well informed, couldst thou let those soldiers pass without saying a word?

CURATE. But, in what way could I keep them from it?

PRIEST. A braggard's talk! Mislead them, send them on a fool's errand! In the meantime, the necessary precautions could have saved all. Go, miserable man, and repent! (Curate enters church, organ sounds within)

In the ambush out of sight,
A stray bullet perchance may light.

In this instance, a sure and well-aimed bullet will strike, and what will be the consequence? An annuity of one thousand ducats a year, a princely income, instantaneously evaporates, and I remain a poor country priest! Gold, the powerful indicator of freedom and independence, stands aloft above any and all religious arguments.

A villain, but rich with open purse,
May enter the gates of heaven,
The God-fearing pious, but poor,
Eternal damnation their lot may be.

Where prayers fail, gold in all instances will accomplish its purpose. I must trust to chance. Should the soldiers capture my handiworks, I am lost, yes, eternally lost.

Enter JACOB, blind, bent almost to the ground, supporting himself on crutches.

JACOB. Oh, my God, let my miseries cease! I can walk no further. (feeling his way with crutch) could I but find a place to rest!

PRIEST. (aside) By heavens, a Jew, and here amongst civilized people!

JACOB. Privation, hunger and miseries beyond any ones conception, has followed me for over a year! Where will my miseries end! Oh, Lord, of Israel, I pray to Thee again, thou, oh Lord, in Thy goodness hast seen fit to deprive me of all, my wife—my children—my freedom—and last but not least, my eyesight, which was my only guide. Oh, my tongue is parched. (finds a bench and drops on it exhausted) Water! I will call, some one may be near and hear me. (feebly) Halloo! Halloo!

PRIEST. Yes, some one is near. What dost thou wish?

JACOB. Thank, God! I was heard. My good sir, as you see, I am a poor blind man, I am so very thirsty, will you have the goodness to supply me with a drink of water? Only water, kind sir!

PRIEST. Whence hailest thou?

JACOB. I have no particular abode. I am wandering from place to place, seeking for something, which I hope shortly to find.

PRIEST. What is it?

JACOB. Death.

PRIEST. (aside) If, as rich as a Jew and as poor as a church mouse, is a true proverb, I shall try to turn a stone, there may be some precious metal gained by analyzing the quartz. All Jews are rich, they are the money kings; and if I was told right, the richer the Jew, the more his pleadings and moanings. This must

be a true specimen. (aloud) So, God's chosen son, thou art wishing to die? Too poor to live, I suppose.

JACOB. No, sir! That is not my reason, I have wealth—one ruby I possess, which may be worth millions. Yea, sir, no money on earth could purchase it.

PRIEST. (aside, delighted) I thought so, I thought so. (aloud) Strange, thou roamest the country with such a precious stone about thee, and without fear of being robbed.

JACOB. (coughs) Robbed, (coughs) robbed, did you say? A world of robbers could not take it from me. (coughs) I have begged you, sir, for a drink of water (coughs) I am so very weak!

PRIEST. (aside) A capital idea. (takes a powder from his pocket) He shall drink the water served by me. This blue mineral will do the work, and the ruby will be mine. (aloud) I perceive that thou art weak and a good draught of fresh, sparkling, spring water may revive thine health and spirit. Yes, yes, I will serve thee myself. (Exit Priest.)

Enter MISKA, comically attired in traveling suit, makes striding steps and takes observation of the surroundings.

MISKA. Take the mainland highway from Batchatka, and you'll reach a valley, a little church you'll observe—correct, this must be the valley, but to all intensities, the little church is in obscurity. (walks against the church) I surrender! Corrugate me, if this edifice is not the very church I am looking for! I am in luck! Proverbially speaking, you must rise early to gather the diamond-tized and pearly dew, which by interpretation, a foregone conclusion, conclusively concluded, by simply remarking the simple simplicity remarkable occurred. And, now, the surety of righteousness, being very favorable in my favor, I must not lose a momentous moment but climb this mountainous mountain. (scratches his head) Suppose General Schutz has not arrived; perhaps some accident may have befallen him. I will make inquiries, some one may give me the information I desire. (espies Jacob, whistles, and with long striding steps advances, and taps him on the shoulder) Good luck to you.

JACOB. I am burning—only a little water, kind sir!

MISKA. Bless your soul, here old man, (gives him canteen,) drink to your heart's content! (as Jacob drinks, Miska recognizes him) What do I see! Is this an illusion! Am I dreaming! Can this be a possible possibility! Jacob, Jacob, I am indeed in luck! (embraces him) I am happy, too happy for utterance. Jacob, Jacob, my happiness, in finding you here, exceeds all descriptive happiness. (casts Jacob from him) Ah, ha! Jacob! I found you at last. My entire fortune to the one who would bring to me Jacob, the Jew, either dead or alive, said my master, James Blue; and now my fortune is made. (enter Priest with mug in hand) Come, Jacob, I must kill you; yes, kill you! I have sworn to do so in order to get possession of a vast estate. (Priest placing his finger to his nose, Miska astonished at the sudden appearance of Priest.)

PRIEST. (in a whisper) Sh!—I have heard all, but thou needst not fear me. I will assist thee and we will divide the spoil.

MISKA. What do you mean?

PRIEST. That Jew, whom thou art about to kill, has a ruby in his possession worth millions. Think of it—millions! Now take this mug, he is craving for water, and let him drink its contents. In two minutes after it, our fortune will be made. Canst thou understand?

MISKA. (thinks) Possible.

PRIEST. Be quick, time is precious, some one may come. Take this mug. (Miska takes mug.)

MISKA. My priestly Priest, proverbially speaking, possession being nine points in law, I have the drop on you!

PRIEST. Thou wilt surely not impair thine own freedom by proving obstinate.

MISKA. Did you really think that I would kill that poor old man? You are, sir, mistakably mistaken. I would not hurt him for all the millions made. (turning to Jacob) Look, Jacob, this man imagines you possess a fortune, and aimed to give you poison.

JACOB. Your voice is very familiar to my ears, but my memory has failed me, therefore I cannot call your name. And as you perceive, I am blind.

MISKA. Blind! Oh, Jacob, how terrible must your sufferings have been. Don't you remember Miska?

JACOB. (coughing and delighted) Miska! The servant of that good and noble man, Bereny? How came you here? Tell me, how long since have you left home?

How is my wife, is she living? (Miska weeps) Do not keep me in suspense! Tell me, Mr. Miska, I can bear all sad tidings!

MISKA. Since you left home, Jacob, a great many changes have taken place, in fact, the wheel of fortune turned the lucky number, and serenity once more reigns supreme. Well, Jacob, to tell you all that has happened would impair my life by straining my lungs to an excess. James Blue committed suicide. Mrs. Bereny has a new father, your wife is in good health, and well taken care of, Master Bereny is living and will be rescued from the clutches of a robber band; your son with the moustahe was arrested—that tells the story briefly related.

JACOB. Are you going to some certain place?

MISKA. Take the mainland highway from the town of Batchatka and you'll reach a valley, a little church you'll notice. Without corroboration, proverbially speaking, I am a messenger from Mrs. Bereny.

PRIEST. Thou art not in a mood, my son, calculated to digest a joke. That mug contains only pure water.

MISKA. Inasmuch as I reverently revere the cloth you wear, I deem it my duty, proverbially speaking, to detain this little mug of water or to prove to me the innocence of this blue tinted liquid, I would kindly and respectfully request you to drink it. And whilst I am in such good humor, proverbially speaking, to digest a good joke, I insist—yes, you must and shall drink this pure spring water.

PRIEST. Not so hasty, my son, not so hasty! Thou art not accustomed to this, our country. Our climate, my son, is not as palatable as in Hungary, therefore, beware. Regulate thy spirit, at least, whilst thou art in Wallachia. Keep the proverb before thee:

Silence means wisdom,
Only a fool talks at random.

I have the power to have thee incarcerated and thy freedom will be impaired thereby. Thou canst avoid all trouble by simply returning to me that mug of water.

MISKA. I fear you not! The fabrication you were trying to establish, that this poor man has a ruby worth millions, was a treacherous intrigue.

JACOB. Do not enter into controversy, on my account, trouble may be the consequence. The jewel I possess could not be extricated from me. It has been handed down from generation to generation. My forefathers were persecuted for the same beautiful ruby; nation after nation have tried to rob us, but it shines as brilliantly to-day as it did three thousand years ago. Judaism, the origin of religion and civilization, is the ruby I possess.

MISKA. Ha, ha, ha! Convulse yourself for your foolhardiness.

SANDUR BERENY appears on mountain in a dilapidated condition, looks behind him.
The setting sun illuminates his face.

MISKA. (who has dropped mug, trembles and points to Sandur Bereny) Look! Look! Who is that personage? Oh, ho-o-o-o-o-o I feel so dumb! Oh, ho-o-o-o-o-o! It is he, and living! What is the use believing in modern gravitation. I feel this earth atumbling and I'll soon be edgeways.

SANDUR B. (at the foot of the mountain) My only and last chance! Should my flight be discovered before I am out of reach, I am lost—lost.

PRIEST. Thou resemblest, in appearance, an escaped lunatic.

SANDUR B. Ha! Whom do I see? Father Clarious!

PRIEST. Lucky enough for thee, my son, to have met me. Thou hast escaped am I guessing correctly? But thou needst not fear me. Silence will save thy life and freedom.

SANDUR B. In what way? You scoundrel, thief and robber! You promise me life and freedom whereas, you would, at the first opportunity, fling me back into the clutches of those men. You are, sir, the instigator of all the murders and robberies committed. I have seen too much of you not to know you. I am a free man now, and my freedom shall be defended with my last breath.

MISKA. Notice poor me, just a little while! O-o-o-o-o Master Bereny, I am so glad—(S. B. retreats, like in a trance) Happy beyond conceptional conception, to have met you perfectly alive.

SANDUR B. Can it be possible—

MISKA. Retreat not, my dear master, I am the same, the very same Miska.

SANDUR B. Am I dreaming? Or is this a phenomenon? (Miska, weeping, is kneeling before Sandur Bereny and repeatedly kisses a part of his coat) Rise, Miska! conceal nothing from me, time is very precious, those hounds may be on my track this very minute, therefore, tell me quick—yes or no, is my wife living?

MISKA. (rising) Yes.

SANDUR B. Thank God!

Enter CURATE, calls Priest aside.

CURATE. Holy Father, the regiment has captured the entire band, and are now slowly descending the mountain.

PRIEST. No more! I will ask thee questions in the presence of these men here, and thou shalt answer them. (Priest and Curate continue a silent conversation.)

SANDUR B. Go as quickly as you can to Batchatka and summon help. In the meantime I shall evade capture. Waste not a moment, but go as fast as your feet can carry you. Why do you hesitate?

JACOB. Away with the crutches! (throws crutches from him) I want strength! Take from me honor, religion, eternal salvation, for one single momentary opportunity. I am blind and yet I can see; I am decrepid, and yet I could walk, yea run, even with the speed of a stallion. I feel an increase of marrow filling the long vacated cavities in my bones—clear the way and let me pass! Justice, justice, I want justice! The guilty shall suffer; even if he is an abstraction of my own blood, no matter! I will proclaim it to the world and let it pass into history. I crave for justice! It is my own son, a descendant of Jacob Aaronson, who has caused the miseries of a nation. Seek for him, deliver him into the hands of law! I will assist you to identify him, I know him, he is my son—he is my son. (cries bitterly and drops on bench exhausted.)

SANDUR B. Can this be Jacob Aaronson?

MISKA. Yes, kind master, and what he has related is too true: His son, with the big moustache, was the leader of a notorious robber band, the same that kidnapped you.

SANDUR B. He is indeed to be pitied. Jacob, listen to me! (touches Jacob.)

JACOB. Touch me not! I have wronged you! I am the cause of your privation of liberty and the terrible sufferings of your wife. Leave me,—go to her,—she is waiting,—go, I say!

SANDUR B. Never! Our lots, Jacob, shall be cast together. We shall live and die in the same path.

JACOB. Why torture me so? You, a noble, true, and generous man, having lost your liberty through the direct agency of an old sinner, should yet hesitate to regain your freedom? Go, Sandur Bereny! I repeat, it was my son! my son! (drum heard from a distance.)

SANDUR B. Listen! A soldiers drum!

PRIEST. Only a robbers signal, my son. They are no doubt seeking for thee. This good curate has just brought me the intelligence, he will testify to that fact. Tell this man what thou hast seen on the mountain. (Curate confused, Priest stands at his back uneasy.)

CURATE. As I was descending the mountain—I saw—I saw—a soldiers band. No, no, a robbers band, led by General—I mean by a monstrous looking robber—I was terribly frightened, as you may know. (sound of drum repeated.)

PRIEST. (in a whisper) Hurry, or we are lost!

CURATE. They espied me from the distance, and in the twinkling of an eye, I was surrounded by those terrible Austrians. No, no, I mean robbers. Seemingly, they were looking for some one, and as I was discovered to be the wrong individual, they released me.

PRIEST. Thou canst draw thine own conclusions, my son.

SANDUR B. You say that you can save me?

PRIEST. Yes.

SANDUR B. Very well. I will trust you once more. But should this prove a treachery—beware!

PRIEST. Fear not, my son! Take thine two good friends with thee and follow me. (All follow Priest into church, Miska leads Jacob. Priest and Curate return immediately.) (Night.)

PRIEST. Thou sayest that the soldiers have captured their prey? How dost thou know it?

CURATE. A pilgrim passing told me of it.

PRIEST. Brace thyself, let thy courage be as sharp as a razor! A duty, which thou hast sworn to perform, must now be put to a test. Should those soldiers come upon us, and find those three men yonder, our lives, as well as our creed will be jeopardized. Remember the password—

Unceasing extermination,
Everlasting damnation,

Erase from earth a nation,
Holy remain our church creation.

The time has come, my good curate, choose thine own method.

CURATE. Advise me, holy father, and I will obey.

PRIEST. Well spoken, my son, and I am indeed proud of thee. Prick thine ears and listen with energy! Those three men must be destroyed. Thou didst promise to obey, and yet I perceive thee shudder. Did not our forefather, Abraham, offer his son Isaac, as an offering to our Lord! Why dost thou hesitate to follow the example, in order to save our church? I will make thine task easy. (walks to church window, listens, and then returns) The torch will accomplish our purpose, and we can retain an easy conscience. (Sandur Bereny appears behind the church unobserved) Come with me. (exit Priest and Curate.) (Sandur Bereny comes forward, watches them as they disappear, then enters church noiselessly.)

Enter PRIEST and CURATE, CURATE holding a lighted torch.

PRIEST. Be quick! I hear the clammering of horses hoofs. Seconds counts minutes, and minutes hours. (Curate shakes with agony) Thou hast the heart of a lizzard and the courage of a gender! Give me the torch (takes torch and approaches church.) (Sander Bereny dashes at Priest, followed by Miska with a rope in hand.)

SANDUR B. Coward!

MISKA. Let me get to him, master! (drum heard nearer) I am handy with the hangman's rope. The probable probabilities are muchly in our favor, therefore let's not lose the golden opportunity.

Enter JEW, CURATE kneeling in fervent prayer, PRIEST, SANDUR BERENY and MISKA struggling. Enter SOLDIERS, from mountain, with the robbers, whose hands are tied.

GENERAL. (addressing robbers) Not only will you gain your freedom, but if you will give me the clue, I will also reward you with a princely sum. How would fifty thousand florins impress you? And should that not prove a sufficiency, name the sum.

FIRST ROBBER. We may kill, we may rob, but tell a lie—never! I have repeatedly told you, General, that Sandur Bereny escaped one day previous to our capture. Though having sought for him, within a radius of ten miles, we have failed to find him.

MISKA. The sun may shine,
The stars may glitter,
The earth move round and round,
The long lost master,
Who was carried thither,
I have found, I have found, I have found!

GENERAL. By heavens! It is Miska. And so my boy, you were determined to follow me.

MISKA. Proverbially speaking, I have carried out my determinial wish, and here I am, full handed. Allow me to introduce to you, my dear master, Sandur Bereny.

GENERAL. Can it be possible! Miska, are you telling the truth, or is this one of your whimsical jests?

SANDUR B. Miska has told you the truth. My condition forces me to place myself under your protection. But to whom am I indebted for such kindness?

GENERAL. The near future will explain all to you. This is the happiest moment of my life! To say the least, I have known your wife in her infancy, she is dearer to me than life. To restore you to her side was my only wish, and, thank God, I have found you.

MISKA. (pointing to Jacob) Perhaps you will recognize this individual.

GENERAL. Recognize him! Could I ever forget those benevolent features which have left such an impression upon my memory. (walks to Jacob) This is indeed a surprise, and my heart is overflowing with joy. My feelings towards you are those of a son to a father. Let me in the future call you and honor you as such. You are silent, are you not glad to meet me?

JACOB. Not glad to meet my rescuer, my truest friend and protector on earth? I am happy, so very happy. Many changes have taken place since you last saw me. Once upon a time we could see one another, but now, God, in his wisdom, has deprived me of my eyesight.

GENERAL. Terrible!

JACOB. Come nearer, my son! let me at least feel of you! (they embrace.)

GENERAL. Miska, take one of my fleetest horses, and fly home, to carry the glad tidings.

MISKA. The rascals you have in charge, General, are of uneven number, so I'll add another. There, well bound, lies the blackest, and I dare say, though wearing a priestly garb, the most dangerous of the gang. Take him with you and hang him first. (Exit.) (Priest, who has succeeded in releasing himself, points two pistols at soldiers.)

PRIEST. The first man who dares lay hands on me, shall die in his track. (soldiers cover him with guns. All march off. Drum beats.)

SCENE II.—Drawing room.

Enter SUSAN with duster in hand.

SUSAN. (dusting furniture at intervals) Dear me, what excitement! So many changes in so short a period,—I fear the results should my mistress be disappointed in her anticipations. I dare not indulge the thought of the consequence! Let me see—seven—(counting on fingers) eight—twelve, to-day she expects a letter from her father. I hope to goodness it will be favorable. Every night before retiring, she reads her husband's letters of courting days over and over again. The tears she has shed over them would swell the Danube. (dusting table) By the way, here are some of those loving letters. (opens package) No offence to read them I hope. (takes seat and read.)

KETCHKEMET, June, 1859.

My Dear Lulka: Here in my hotel do I ponder, watching the candlelight as it flickers. My thoughts are wandering and my imaginations are acute. I shut my eyes to cast off all horrid pictures, that present themselves in the flickering light; and draw nearer to me a face resembling an angel. Where on earth could I substitute a face more beautiful, more angelic than your own? I have accomplished my mission here, and my return will be as swift as possible. Keep up a good spirit, my dearest! Though your father objects to our union, we will yet overcome that strong will of his and conquer—

Let's wait till the storm subsides,
Thunder and lightning pass by,
And the glittering sun throws its light—
In that change, our happiness may lie.

Your ever loving,
SANDUR.

What a beautiful letter? Now here goes for another.

MAROS WASHARHELY, July, 1859.

My Beloved: Since writing my last, in which I declared my early return, business of a very peculiar nature, compelled me to come here. Imagine my disappointment, after having my wings spread, ready to fly to my beloved, to then be obliged to lower them. (enter Miska) But only for a short time, very short indeed. Oh, how my heart languishes for one little (Miska coughs, Susan drops letter) speak of angels and the devil appears.

MISKA. Thanks for your compliment.

SUSAN. Ha, ha, ha! I didn't mean it, indeed I didn't.

MISKA. What did you mean then by making such comparison? You surely were not thinking of me.

SUSAN. Surely I was. I have thought of you day by day and night by night. Only last night I was wishing with my heart and soul for your early return. The cats made such a terrible racket, how handy you would have been to stop the mew, mew, mew! By the way, Miska, tell me about your trip?

MISKA. Not a down bit of it.

SUSAN. (stroking his chin) Be clever now, come, tell me!

MISKA. Must you know?

SUSAN. I must.

MISKA. Look at me, look at me good, and tell me, do I look like a martyr?

SUSAN. Judging from appearances, your question would elicit a very unfavorable answer.

MISKA. That settles it.

SUSAN. Don't misconstrue me, I said appearances.

MISKA. You mean to say then, that appearances are taken into consideration to judge a man's abilities.

SUSAN. Exactly.

MISKA. Supposing—mind, this is only a supposition—if I should tell you that I—hem—hem—rescued Master Bereny, found Jacob Aasonson and so on and so forth, what would you think of me?

SUSAN. I would say that you are a darling dear.

MISKA. That settles it.

SUSAN. You are a Hippopotamus, a Gibbon, a giraffe, a zebra, a—a—a—everything bad imaginable. (cries.)

MISKA. That settles it.

SUSAN. Here you come home from a mission of such great importance, and instead of telling me all, you only arouse my curiosity.

MISKA. How fares Mrs. Bereny? Could she under ordinary circumstances, receive intelligence either good or bad, without it proving fatal to her?

SUSAN. I'll vouch for that.

MISKA. That settles it.

SUSAN. Do not trifle with me, I am no playtoy.

MISKA. Lower your temper, and you shall know all—everything. Take the mainland highway from the town of Batchatka, and you'll reach a valley, a little church you'll notice—proverbially speaking, I was there.

SUSAN. Well?

MISKA. I met the general. And the missive, which he intrusted to me, I must deliver to Mrs. Bereny only.

SUSAN. No, no, Miska, impossible. You know her nervous disposition. Tell me, and I will break the news to her gently, so as not to over exert her nerves.

MISKA. Very well, Susan, let it be as you say. My regard for your personality forces me to reveal the secret to you first. To say little in a big chapter and to make myself well understood in such a critical moment as the present, and with all due consideration on my part, I have concluded to reveal to you my individual secret also. First of all, to satisfy your inquisitiveness, I may as well tell you that I have seen Master Bereny and Jacob; also, that they are now on their way home. That secret was briefly related. (Miska twisting handkerchief acting bashful.)

SUSAN. Happiness, oh what happiness! (exit Susan unobserved by Miska.)

MISKA. My own and most important secret I discovered during my travel. (enter Missionary, taking position in same place where Susan stood unobserved by Miska) Leaving home with a light heart, and returning with a galloping liver complaint, is a bad indication. It goes to prove how men are often deceived in themselves, by trying to cast off the thought which the heart indicates. Susan, am I not a human being and a man of manhood? Can't the fibers of my heart vibrate as well as in another man's heart? Then, why not relieve myself of a continual torture, which the world calls—love? My malady points in that direction. (approaches Missionary, bashful) Yes, Susan, I am compelled to sacrifice myself and in plain, unobscured language, tell you that I love you. I have often noticed that you were ready to reciprocate, but the opportunity did not offer itself until the present moment. (takes hand of Missionary) Your silence, my dearest darling Susan, encourages me. (Miska looks up, discovers his mistake; with surprise and wonderment he eyes her for a few seconds.)

Enter LULU, SUSAN and SARAH. Exit Missionary. Miska, dumbfounded, watches the Missionary as she disappears.

SUSAN. There, my mistress, stands Miska, the messenger of the good news, I was just relating to you.

MISKA. Take it away! This is no hallucination, I have seen it once before. A devil, caricatured in a human shape. It's very step springs fire with lashes of steel-pointed daggers; hoofs instead of feet; its breath creates a cyclone. It is a devil, I say, take it away!

LULU. Oh, my God! I am once more deceived. This man is crazy, and what he told you, my good Susan, is only the imagination of a shattered brain.

SUSAN. Not so, madame, he was rational a minute ago.

MISKA. I beg pardon, madame, excuse my emotions. I can't account for it, a spirit follows me, which will yet be the cause of my premature death.

LULU. Cast away your superstitious ideas! And if true that you were commissioned by General Schutz to deliver a message to me, duty binds you to do so at once; therefore, suspense with all the synopsis of your traveling experience? I demand the immediate delivery of the message as you received it.

Enter SOLDIER with a letter.

SOLDIER. (salutes) With due respects to Madame Bereny! I was ordered to deliver this letter to her only. (Exit.)

LULU. (scanning the address) Susan, look at this writing! Don't you recognize it? Oh, my God, give me strength! (opens letter and reads,)

VIENNA.

My dearest, dearest wife: At last, at last, I am rescued and can hardly realize my narrow escape from a terrible death! Your father, proud may my darling wife be to have such a father, has told me concerning James Blue's black conspiracy. The disguise, your father adopted, in order to ferret out the mystery concerning his long lost child, and after having found her to suppress his identity, proves his iron will and great courage. Poor old Jacob, who happened to stray near my place of captivity, was picked up half dead by the general, your father. He is with us and is rapidly improving. Father, who's authority is powerful in Austria, and especially in Vienna, is pleading for the rights of the Jews, and has succeeded in securing their freedom in Hungary. He has also liberated Samuel, (Jacob Aaronson's son,) who was sentenced to be executed. My thoughts and greatest anxieties dwell upon reaching you, my dearest on earth. And now, father's work being accomplished, we will start for home. Once more united, death shall be the only cause for our future separation.

Your ever devoted

SANDUR.

LULU staggers and falls into chair.

SARAH. Run for help, Susan, Madame is fainting!

LULU. Stop! Do not disturb me in this heavenly repose! Let me think,—he is living, my Sandur, my husband has been resuscitated from the grave, and will soon be with me. Oh, my God, this happiness is too much—too much. (cries.)

SARAH. Your tears, Madame Bereny, are tears of joy and happiness. The black cloud of destiny has passed away and sunshine will brighten your future life. God has linked my destiny with yours, our misfortunes were similar, and yet, Madame, under the great weight of my own miseries, I prayed daily for you, and wished to live long enough to see you and your kind husband reunited. The anticipations of meeting my husband makes my heart flow over with joy, and doubly so for your sake. Madame, do not restrain your tears, let them flow. (Miska watching at the window.)

LULU. Thanks, my good woman, for your kindness. Remember, my house shall be your abode; as we shared equal sorrows, so shall we share proportional happiness. (rising from seat) Off with this veil of mourning and widowhood! Give me gay colors, green, red or blue; bedeck me with ribbons of the gayest designs! Go, all of you, and proclaim through the village the news! Let them come—young, old, little and big in their festive dress to receive Sandur Bereny, my husband. Ha, ha, ha! My husband!

MISKA. Compose yourself, Madame, and temper your emotions. I hardly think that I mistake them. (all rush to windows.)

LULU. Oh, Miska, speak frankly to the objects approaching! I may discern them even from afar.

MISKA. Watch yonder peak!

LULU. Ha, I can see a spot appear which glows with the red white heat of a furnace, and forms the centre of a fiery cupalo, from which the flames are flung in red and gross masses. Now, it is darkening into wild and dusky indistinctiveness. From behind the hills I see a thick shower of burning particles, rushing up into midair; and the broad point of a huge pyramid of fire waivering in terrible and capricious power, which seems to disport itself far up into the very depths of the glowing sky. Behind that spectacle, I see people approaching. Here they come—nearer—nearer. Heavenly Father support me! My heart will break—my brain—my head! Look, it is he, my Sandur. Make room.

SANDUR. (without) Lulu! Lulu! My wife.

LULU. Open all doors, and let him pass over the threshold! Yes, he has come at last, the grave has delivered up its dead! Here he is, here is my husband!

SANDUR BERENY rushes in followed by GENERAL, JACOB and SEGO.

SANDUR. My wife! (Lulu faints into her husband's arms.)

JACOB. Praised be our God! Where is my wife, Sarah?

SARAH. (rushing into his arms) Here I am!

GENERAL. (addressing Lulu, who has recovered composure, in silent conversa-

tion with Sandur) Now, my daughter, I have fulfilled my promise. What shall my reward be?

LULU. An embrace and a kiss. (they embrace.)

SEGO. (who, until now, was in the rear, is approaching Sarah) I do not deserve your recognition, my dear mother, nevertheless father has given me his blessing. Now, I pray your forgiveness. Encourage me, and I will yet prove myself worthy of your esteem.

SARAH. Samuel, my son and only child, why should I scorn you? Have I not prayed for you and your early deliverance? Welcome—thrice welcome, my son!

SEGO. My dear and best of all mothers, how can I express my feelings of happiness! I can only repay your kindness by proving my true repentance. (they weep and embrace.)

SARAH. God bless my child, and forgive his past errors!

GENERAL. As happiness now reigns supreme, I cannot use the opportunity more advantageously than by revealing a secret, connecting the advents of my own life and concerning you, my daughter, as well as Sarah Aaronson.

LULU. That reminds me that you have repeatedly promised to relate to me the history of your life.

GENERAL. So I did, my child, so I did, but could not do so until this present moment. To give a minute description of my past life would fill volumes upon volumes, and give a novelist more scope to vie his pen upon reality than upon fiction. Twenty-two years ago I courted and wedded a creature as beautiful and pure as ever God created. That angelic being, my dear daughter, was your mother. But we enjoyed the felicity of married life for the short period of three years only. At that time I held a position in the army, and being very ambitious of gaining a national reputation, I joined Maximillian in his venture in Mexico. My dear wife with a little baby in her arms, followed me through all hardships, and from over exertion and exposure to a malarial climate, she suddenly died.

SARAH. (aside) My poor child fared the same fate.

GENERAL. My capture followed simultaneously. Imagine my feelings! I was desperate, and to save my life, as well as the life of my little angel, I planned an escape. My aid de camp was the only man whom I could trust, therefore, I placed my little darling, then only two years old, in his arms. He faithfully promised to raise her, in case misfortune should befall me. I must not forget to mention, previous to my departure for Mexico, I had willed my entire fortune to my dear little angel. My plan proved successful and I escaped. To make my way back to Austria was an impossibility; therefore, I tried to cross the frontiers and reach Austria, but misfortune again followed me, I was captured and incarcerated. My trial was short, and imprisonment for life was pronounced without giving me any chance for defence. What followed, only God knows! What a catalogue of ills I had suffered, during fifteen years confinement in ten or more dungeons, is indescribable. At last, through the cause of a revolution, I was liberated. I at once instituted search for my child. Seven long years I traveled from country to country, with but one ambition—to find her. At the termination of all hope of ever seeing my little angel, in despair and terrible disappointment, I cursed my existence. On my way to Vienna, after relinquishing all search, I met a female missionary, who, in answer to my questions, informed me of your present abode. But she said, "beware of James Blue!" I at once concluded to adopt a disguise and judge for myself how my child had been treated.

LULU. Terrible! Terrible!

GENERAL. The secret, which I promised to divulge to you, is only partial of my recital. Madame Aaronson, do you remember the gay Colonel who loved your daughter?

SARAH. How could I ever forget him! The occurrence is yet too vivid before me. My poor child!

GENERAL. Suppose the same Colonel should appear to you now and pray your forgiveness?

SARAH. God, who rules the universe, willed the occurrence. His bidding must be obeyed. The love of my daughter for the young colonel was a love too pure; otherwise, she would not have taken such a step as to marry a gentile. My forgiveness, kind sir, with my blessings followed him as well as my child.

GENERAL. Dear Madame, I cannot keep my identity from you any longer. I am the Colonel, who married your daughter.

SARAH. You!

GENERAL. Yes. But years of hardships have made many a change in me, even

my most intimate friends have failed to know me. Lulu, my dear daughter, this is your grand mother, honor her and remember she is the mother of your mother. (Lulu weeps in Sarah's arms.)

SARAH. My compensation in gaining such a jewel and my happiness derived thereby opens an era of new life to me. May God bless you, my grandchild, forever and ever more.

MISKA and SUSAN during all this conversation are standing in opposite directions of stage flirting.

GENERAL. Miska, my boy, you have rendered me good service. (Miska still engaged flirting, does not hear him. General is convulsed with laughter and watches them. Miska, turning suddenly, perceives the General with much confusion.)

MISKA. Excuse me, General! I—I—am so very—very absent-minded—did you speak to me?

GENERAL. Not exactly. You need not mind me, my boy, continue your absent-mindedness.

MISKA. I was only making a calculation. Proverbially speaking, I was trying to measure the distance between here and the moon.

GENERAL. Well, did you succeed?

MISKA. Comparatively speaking, I come within twelve feet.

GENERAL. The object of your calculation, being so close, perhaps I can help you in your terrible entanglement. Now, my boy, step forward six feet! (Miska obeys) Susan, will you consent to help Miska solve this problem? (Susan blushes) Come, my girl—only six feet you know—(Susan advances five steps with her back turned toward Miska) One more—(Susan obeys)—So!—Now, my boy, how many more inches do you miss to reach the moon?

MISKA. I have reached it within the breadth of a hair.

GENERAL. I perceive that there is a particular friendship existing between you. Am I right in my conjecture? Terminate that suspense, which generally exists between two loving hearts, and join hand in hand for good or bad. Susan, speak frankly, do you love Miska?

SUSAN. (confused) I have had no chance to premeditate.

MISKA. No chance! Have I not made my intentions known to you on various occasions? Susan, I may as well express my sentiments once more—I love you. Promise to become my wife, and I am the happiest man on earth.

SUSAN. I will acquiesce, only conditionally.

MISKA. Name your conditions!

SUSAN. Cease in the future your calculations, and let some other man finish the task.

MISKA. And you'll marry me?

SUSAN. Under that condition only.

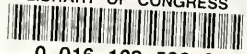
MISKA. I promise.

SUSAN. Take me—I am yours! (they embrace.) Curtain.





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